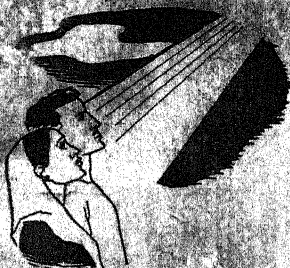


IN HIM WAS LIGHT

By
F. L. BRAYNE
M.C., C.S.I., I.C.S.

Sam Higginbottom
14.10.44



*In Him was life, and the life
was the light of men.*
John i. 4

WITH FOREWORDS BY
THE BISHOP OF LAHORE & DR SAM HIGGINBOTTOM

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FIRST FOREWORD

PEOPLE in the Punjab are indebted to Mr (now Brigadier) F. L. Brayne for many things. His indomitable campaign for rural uplift, where he has broken lances innumerable for the reconstruction of village life, is known to all who know the Punjab villages first-hand and to many dwellers in towns also who read his red-hot gospels, through the mouth of Socrates and others, pleading with all the force at his command for a readjustment of thought and action in regard to those things which are concerned with the prosperity or poverty of the villagers.

Now Brigadier Brayne puts us who are most especially concerned with our Christian Punjabi villagers under a further obligation. The rural reconstruction schemes which he urges on the Punjab, with such unrelenting enthusiasm, cannot fail to be connected in the mind of one who is a staunch believer in the Christian faith with the Founder of that Faith who came that 'men might have life and might have it more abundantly'. There is therefore for Brigadier Brayne an obvious connexion between things spiritual and things material.

This connexion he brings to our notice with the same incisive and enthusiastic lucidity as before. The book is meant for Christian villagers and seeks to make them realize that rural uplift is supported at every turn by words from Holy Writ and especially by the words and actions of Jesus Christ Himself. Commonsense is therefore implemented by the lessons we can assimilate from the Bible: the movement of rural uplift finds its fullest justification in Christ's words and the teaching which bids man make the most of life, body, mind and spirit and rejoice in the brotherhood of spirit.

The author shows a very sound and extensive knowledge of the Bible and in these pages harmonizes its

teachings to the great movement of rural reconstruction of which he has long been such a doughty and unflinching advocate.

I hope that those who live and work in our villages will make ample use of this valuable addition to the books by which we should live 'abundantly' as our Lord and Master Jesus Christ has enjoined us to do. Christian homes are the heritage of all Christian people everywhere. The principles which convert a house into a home should be the common property of all mankind.

I wish the book God-speed.

GEORGE LAHORE

5th Bishop of Lahore

*President, North-West Indian
Christian Council*

SECOND FOREWORD

FRANK L. BRAYNE is well known to all those interested in rural welfare in India. He has spent much of his official life in considering the villagers' problems. These are not always the problems that occur to the swivel-chair artist. His findings come from long and intimate contact with the farmer in his normal setting. So many would-be-reformers go to the village and see so many difficulties and obstacles, its stark hopelessness, that they are overwhelmed, and say the contradictions are so many that nothing can be done. They throw up their hands in despair and leave the village to solve its own problems.

But not so Frank Brayne. Seeing the village as it really is, challenged him to make the attempt to do something to improve it. It is now possible to go into Punjab rural areas and note distinct differences. In one area the crops have a good, rich, dark-green, healthy

colour promising a good yield. The cattle are in good condition, the people are healthy and alert, neat and tidy, very few sore eyes, or smallpox marked faces. Just outside the village is a row of square pits into which the owner puts manure from his animals, all kitchen wastes and other organic matter. This then ripens and later is spread on the fields. The village is clean, no heaps of filth to spread filth and disease. What helps to keep the village sanitary also improves the yields and quality of the crops grown and thus raises the standard of living of the people. He that hath ears hath heard and profited. Near the areas that have adopted Brigadier Brayne's methods, are those who having ears have not heard, so the crops are yellow, weakly, with poor yield, the village lanes littered with filth and refuse, flies make life miserable as well as spread disease: sore eyes, open sores, smallpox marked faces are common, no pits for storing village waste, the people depressed and hopeless.

Brigadier Brayne's teaching and writing has produced results which prove he was right in his methods. Some of us felt that his great gift as a teacher could be used to help the Indian Christian community which has not made the social and economic progress it ought to have done. So we asked him to prepare this book.

Brigadier Brayne has learned that what a person believes, determines his action. If he holds wrong beliefs his actions cannot be right. Any belief inevitably leads to action based upon that belief. Therefore Brigadier Brayne appeals to this citadel of human personality and tries to fill it with right beliefs, then right action can follow. Another great thing he has done is not to have attempted some great complicated scheme, but a number of small, easily understood things, which demand only the will to do them. They also call for

co-operation, the essence of which is so to conduct one's self, that others can work with one. Naaman's leprosy was cured in a very simple way.

I am deeply grateful to Brigadier Brayne for taking time, in his busy life, to write such a book. I know of no one else who has the knowledge born of experience that so ably fits him to prepare such a study. He lays the whole Christian community in India under great obligation to him for devoting his attention to their special problems. I am sure rural Christian workers will find this book helpful to discuss with their village friends.

24 November 1942

SAM HIGGINBOTTOM
Agricultural Institute
Allahabad

INTRODUCTION

DURING my wanderings as a civil official, I used to visit many Christian villages and homes. As a Christian myself, I expect to see nice homes, which I have been brought up to regard as one of the principal ideals of Christianity. I do find some, but not nearly as many as I should like to see. A nice home is not the product of wealth. The poorest are often the best. They are the product of that 'Peace of God which passeth all understanding'¹ and of hard work, patience, good taste, and the utilization of all knowledge and resources available. They are the product of women who have been brought up to pray 'Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth',² and so try to make their homes and children fit for, or rather, a real part of that Kingdom, and of men who have learnt to do their farming or their crafts 'heartily, as unto the Lord'.³

¹ Phil. iv. 7.

² Matt. vi. 10.

³ Col. iii. 23.

The object of this book is to try to teach, with all reverence and humility, what I firmly believe, that if our religion cannot make our daily lives brighter, then it is not worth having. If our Christianity does not mean better, happier homes then surely it cannot be Christianity at all.

Some readers may accuse me of exaggeration and of harshness. The last thing I should like to do is to hurt or to give offence, but I do want to state my case quite clearly and without the slightest attempt to hide or gloss over anything which I think should be pointed out.

Years ago a crotchety fellow called Socrates began to scold the Punjab countrymen about what he saw in their homes and villages. Many people thought he was unreasonable and overstated his case, as well as being needlessly harsh in his manner and speech. Socrates stuck to his guns, however, and no one will now deny that he achieved his purpose, and the Punjab village is all the better for the rude things he said and wrote. This is exactly what I want to do now and if this little book succeeds in stimulating those for whom it is written to make their homes happier and healthier, then its bluntness and tactlessness will easily be forgiven.

The importance of health and 'daily bread' can be clearly seen in the Gospels. And yet in the Indian Christian community poverty is often a baffling problem. This book does not pretend to solve this problem, but it makes some suggestions. Its object is, first, to insist that the Gospel is concerned with the body as well as the soul, and therefore, that Christianity must not neglect health and economics. Its second object is to show that many of our troubles are due to ignorance or laziness, and that a great deal can be done by self-help, co-operation and by making the fullest use of the good things which have been brought within our reach by

Government and other agencies. To those who believe in an Almighty and All-loving God, the beneficent discoveries of science are His gifts, and talents given us by Him to be used, and for which we shall be held to account.

I would not have dared to publish such a book if I had not been encouraged most heartily to do so by many Christian missionaries and workers to whom I mentioned the idea and showed the manuscript, and I am most grateful to them for their help in producing this book, and also for the continuous help and encouragement I have always received from the Christian missionaries since the very beginning of the 'Better-village' movement in the Punjab more than twenty years ago.

The Right Reverend George Barne, Bishop of Lahore, and Dr Sam Higginbottom, president of the American Presbyterian Christian College of Allahabad have written forewords which will greatly increase the value of this book. I am most grateful to both of them, both for this signal mark of their kindness, and for much encouragement received for many years in my work of village uplift.

I am much indebted to Mr S. Neale Alter of the American Mission to Syria for a lot of writing and typing, which has enabled me to go on with and finish this book in spite of a whole-time job as a temporary officer of the Indian Army. Even so, a book that has been written over a period of more than three years, and very busy years at that, and much of it at odd moments during journeys in trains, is bound to be disjointed and scrappy. I have decided, however, to publish it at once rather than wait to improve it during some spell of leisure, which very likely will never come at all!

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An Urdu translation of this book is now in the press. It is written in the simplest possible Urdu and accurately represents the author's meaning. It reads as smoothly as if the book were first written in Urdu.

A book such as this should be available in as many Indian languages as possible and it is hoped that translations will soon be published.

In order to keep the price low and so to make the book easily available the author has declined to accept any royalties from his publishers.

I

*Of such is the Kingdom of God*¹

AN elderly stranger was walking through a village in the Punjab, and outside the poorer part he passed a group of grubby unwashed little boys and girls, clothed in dirty rags, their ears, wrists and ankles cluttered with cheap ornaments, their eyes dirty, and some of them fringed with flies. Several of the children squinted or had one or both eyes permanently damaged.

'Of such is the Kingdom of God,' said the Stranger to himself, but his voice was so angry that a woman kneading dung-cakes nearby heard him.

'What do you mean?' she snapped. 'That is a verse from the Bible.'

'Oh! you're a Christian are you? I shouldn't have guessed it from the look of those wretched children.'

'Yes, I am a Christian,' she snarled. 'Why should you sneer at my children? We are poor people here, and can't afford fine clothes and gold ornaments.'

'It is not a matter of money or of fine clothes and gold ornaments,' the Stranger answered. 'It is a matter of knowledge and hard work inspired by the love of Jesus Christ.'

'Are you a Christian too, then?' she said rather less aggressively.

'I try to be,' he said, 'but like you, I find it difficult.'

'What do you mean?' she asked, 'I am a real Christian, baptized, confirmed and married in Church.'

'That is only the beginning,' the Stranger said. 'These children don't look like Christians.'

¹ Luke xviii. 16. Quotations throughout the book are from the English Bible, Revised Version.

‘Why not?’

‘Well, don’t you pray every day “Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth”?¹ Do you think God’s



‘OF SUCH IS THE KINGDOM OF GOD’, MUTTERED THE STRANGER

throne in Heaven is surrounded by dirty, sore-eyed children clothed in rags, and wearing cheap bangles and ear-rings?’

¹ Matt. vi. 10.

'Of course not,' she said.

'Then if God's will is to be done on earth as it is in Heaven, these children should be washed, their eyes kept clean and their clothes mended. You learnt to sew at school, I expect?'

'I did,' she admitted rather ruefully, 'but I'm afraid I've forgotten most of what I learnt at school. We get so slack about these things when we leave school and settle down.'

'You've even forgotten about bhoosa-boxes¹—I see you are still making dung-cakes—and chimneys. "Thy kingdom come." If the King, Jesus Christ, comes here today, He will find smoky walls and beams, no ventilation and a dark untidy house.'

'But we are so poor,' said the woman again.

'Poverty should not be an excuse for dirt and darkness. Even poor people can keep their houses clean and tidy, and many of them do, I am glad to say; they put in ventilators, grow a few flowers outside, and wash their children. How can Jesus set up His Kingdom here with all this unnecessary dirt and squalor and suffering about? Jesus wants things to be nice in His Kingdom, and if we can possibly do so, we must make them nice. It is not a matter of money, as I said before.'

'Yes,' she said at once, 'you said it was a matter of knowledge. But no one has ever told me about these things since I left school, and even there I never heard half what you have just said.'

'Then, somehow or other, we must give you this knowledge,' said the Stranger as he moved away. 'Yes, that's it, knowledge is what is wanted.'

'Every boy and every girl must be taught in school and in the Sunday school all that part of Christianity

¹ See p. 123.

which is included in the commands of Jesus Christ "heal the sick, clothe the naked, feed the hungry". For the grown-up's these things must be taught in every way possible—even in church on Sundays. They are called "blessed of my Father" who helps those who are hungry, naked, thirsty, homeless and in trouble.¹ How can Christianity flourish when only half of our Lord's commands are obeyed, when only the spiritual side of man is dealt with? Without attention to man's body, man's soul may wilt and shrivel.

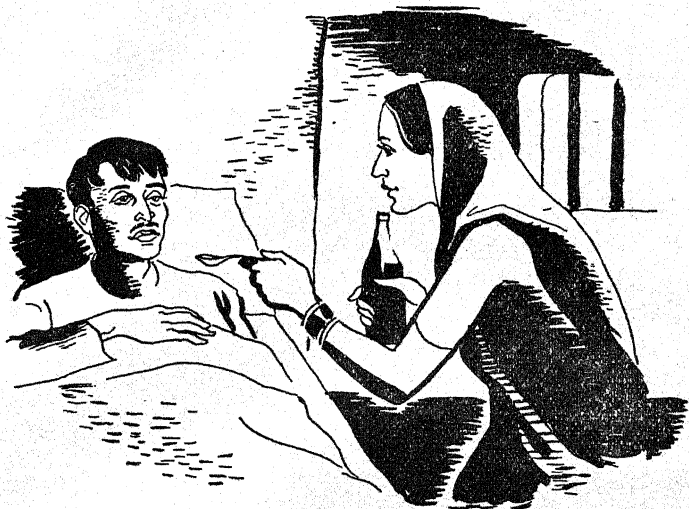
'Before our Lord sent out His disciples He told them to heal the sick as well as to preach the kingdom of God, and He gave them power to cure diseases. "He called the twelve together, and gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases."² By the grace of God we have discovered much about the prevention and cure of disease and how to make a living out of the soil and by other means, so that health may be maintained. Have not these discoveries therefore given us also a "power" to heal diseases and what is even better, to prevent them? Surely then our teachers and preachers must be given this power if we are to follow in His footsteps.

'We cannot learn everything, but we must learn all we can. Some must be expert in some things, some in others. But we must all learn the outlines of the new methods of improving home and village; we must all learn the simple ways of preserving health and we must all learn the use of simple medicines. We may not have what is called the gift of healing but God has enabled us both to relieve much pain and sickness by the use of simple medicines and to prevent much more pain and sickness by following certain simple rules of cleanliness,

¹ Matt. xxv. 35-45.

² Luke ix. 1.

diet and so on, and by taking certain simple precautions such as vaccination, the use of mosquito nets, latrines, etc. "Freely have we received, freely must we give" of the sciences of farming, health, industry, housekeeping and



WE CAN RELIEVE PAIN BY THE USE OF SIMPLE MEDICINES

the bringing up of children, and all the branches of knowledge which will help us, if inspired by the love of God, to bring His Kingdom to the homes of our poorer brethren.'

II

*He that Believeth on Me, the Works
that I do shall he do also¹*

After leaving the woman and the dirty children, the Stranger went on through the Christian *basti*, deep in thought. He was passing the open door of a small poor-

¹ John xiv. 12.

looking but beautifully clean and tidy house, when he heard a man reading '... Jesus, who went about doing good, and healing them that were oppressed of the devil'.¹

'How wonderful! What comforting words!' he said to himself. 'The cure for all our troubles! Would to God that some one would come and do that here.'

He was so thrilled by the words he had heard, that although he spoke only to himself, the reader heard him, and looked up.

'How can that happen?' asked the reader, who was a Christian preacher. 'These words were written nearly two thousand years ago. It can't happen again.'

'I know, I know,' said the Stranger, 'but does not Jesus Christ still live? And how often did He not tell His disciples to follow him?'

'I don't understand you, sir,' said the preacher, wondering who this stranger was who also knew the words of the Gospel.

'Preacherji,' said the Stranger, 'as I was coming along your street, I saw dirty children, diseased children, children with sore eyes. I saw filth outside the houses and darkness inside. I saw poverty and suffering, undeserved and unnecessary suffering. I was in despair. But as I passed your door I heard and recognized all at once the cure for it all. If the Son of God went about doing good, must not we too, His followers and disciples, do the same?'

'But we have not the power, sir.'

'Did he not say: "He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also, and greater works than these"?' Don't you suppose that in those days the villages of Palestine were much as many villages are in India

¹ Acts x. 38.

² John xiv. 12.

today ? Would you not find many sick persons to bring out into the streets if a Healer were to come today ?'

'There are plenty of sick, sir ; plenty in every village. But where is the Healer ?'

'We must all be healers, you, preacherji, and I, and all who know the words of the Gospel. How else can we do even greater works than He did ?'

'That is impossible.'

'If you say so, then of course it is impossible, as faith alone can enable us to follow in our Master's footsteps. Do you not remember that Jesus Christ said, "All things are possible to him that believeth" ?'¹

'I have faith, but it does not help me to heal any one.'

'Faith alone will not do it. Faith without works is dead,² and the works in this case are the obtaining of all knowledge and the using of all means and agencies that will help.

'Have you never heard of quinine to cure malaria ? Of vaccination to prevent small-pox ? Of windows and ventilators to bring in air and light, which will keep you fresh and healthy ? Of drains and manure pits and latrines, which will keep the village clean, and prevent flies breeding and so save you all from many diseases ? Of better seed for crops ; of fruit, vegetables and milk to enable you to give better food to your children, and so to make them grow up strong and straight, and so to save them from many of the diseases they now suffer from ? If we practise and preach these things, shall we not be following the example of our Master ?'

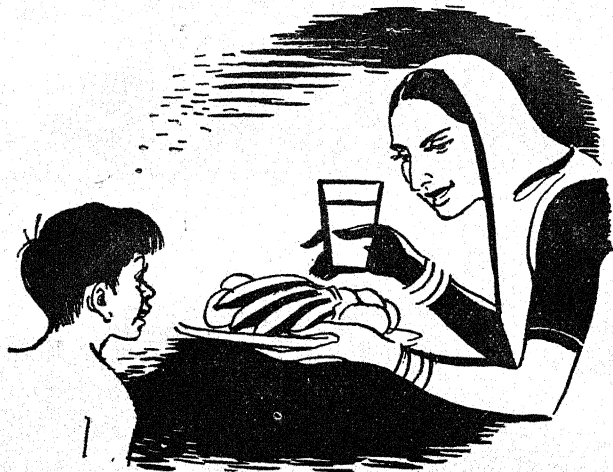
'But there is nothing about these new things in the Gospel.'

'Of course not. They were not invented then. But do you not think that vaccination is a gift of God ? When

¹ Mark ix. 23.

² James ii. 17.

He sent His only Son to heal the sick, dare you say that vaccination is an invention of the devil? "He that is not against us is for us."¹ Cannot you believe that all these new things are given us by the mercy of God,



FRUIT AND MILK ARE GOOD FOR CHILDREN

through His infinite love for us? If the Son of God laid down. His life to save us can you not believe that all these wonders of science which will help to make us well and strong, and will help us to fight poverty and dirt and debt, are sent by God for us to use? Surely it is a sin, and a very grievous sin if we neglect to use them. "Every good gift and every perfect boon is from above, coming down from the Father of Lights"² and we should make full use of them all.'

'Yes, but the verse you heard me reading said that Jesus healed those who were oppressed of the devil. We have no devils here.'

¹ Mark ix. 40.

² James i. 17.

'No devils, indeed? What do you think devils are?'

'The Jinns and such-like creatures that frightened us before we were Christians.'

'And still do sometimes, I daresay.'

'Yes, we have not all got rid of our old fears yet.'

'They still talk of devils in many countries, and in pictures these creatures have horns and forked tails. There are bogies and fairies, too, that some of us still half believe in. But those are not the only or the worst devils. This country is full of devils today, far worse devils than any of the kind you are talking about.'

'Where are they?'

'Well, what does a devil do?'

'He makes us sin.'

'Well, then, if a man is in debt isn't he tempted sometimes to steal or to be dishonest?'

'Yes, I fear that is often so.'

'Then is not debt a devil?'

'If you look at it that way, I daresay debt is a devil.'

'A terrible devil. And what about dirt and disease?'

'They do not make us sin.'

'Dirt is itself a sin, but both it and disease are the result of ignorance.'

'Is ignorance a sin, too?'

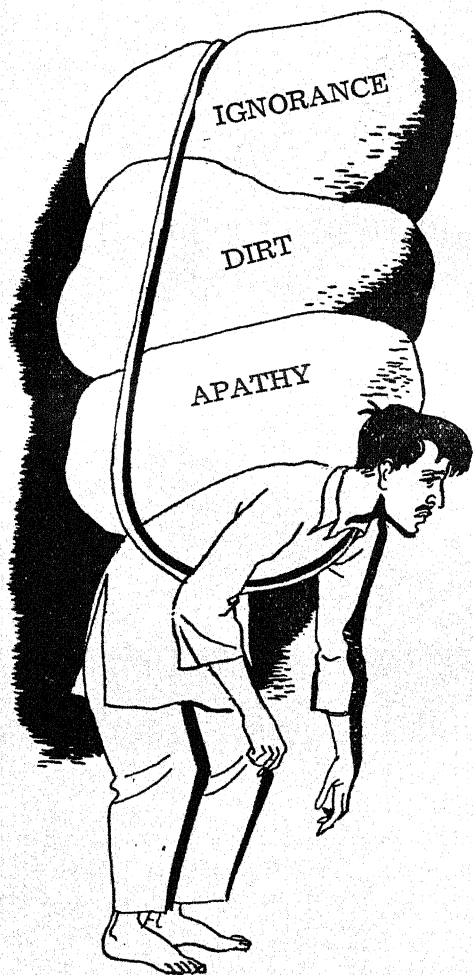
'No, ignorance is a devil. It drives you to superstition, to deceit, and to all kinds of evil.'

'Indeed it does. It is the cause of most of our ills and troubles.'

'But does not a devil destroy you as well as make you sin?'

'Yes, the devil goeth about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour.'¹

¹ Peter v. 8.



OPPRESSED BY DEVILS

'Then all these things debt, dirt, disease, poverty and ignorance are all devils, as they all either destroy you

or make you sin. Apathy is another devil, perhaps the worst of them all, as it makes you do nothing to try and put things right.'

'That seems to be so.'

'And the cure for all these troubles is the village uplift scheme of which you have often heard, I expect.'

'Yes, but I am a preacher of the Gospel not of village uplift.'

'Village uplift is part of the Gospel. Did not Jesus Christ tell us to heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, clothe the naked and feed the hungry?¹ How can you do this without all these new things which are now being taught in the villages? All this new knowledge of better farming, better health, better industries, co-operation and all the rest are talents which the great Master gives to His servants, and which he wants to be fully used and not to be buried in the ground.² As a teacher and preacher it is your duty, in Church and out of it, to tell all these things to your people.'

'But would Jesus Christ use these things if He came here again?'

'If Jesus came to India today, He would most certainly make use of all the new things that science has brought to help us make village life more healthy and more happy. And it is our duty to do so too.'

'But can I do this in church and on Sundays?'

'Most certainly you can. Did not Jesus Christ heal the man with a withered hand on the Sabbath Day and in the synagogue, too? Did he not also say, "The Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath".³ You can surely use the church and Sundays to teach your people to make their lives happier. Did not Jesus ask "Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm,

¹ Matt. xxv. 35.

² Matt. xxv. 14-30.

³ Mark ii. 27-8.

to save a life or to destroy it ? ” ¹ Did He not heal the sick and teach the people at the same time, and on all the days of the week ? ’

‘That argument seems unanswerable, sir.’

‘God has allowed us to discover new and better ways of living and farming and doing business and it is our duty as Christians to make full use of the good gifts of God, in order to fight debt, disease and poverty, and to heal the sick, to relieve suffering, and to spread good-will and happiness.’

‘“ He went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil,” ² and we, His followers ought to copy His example.’

III

Fight the Good Fight ³

‘What a dirty child ! ’ said the Stranger to a village woman as he walked past a house in the poorer quarter of the *abadi*. ‘ And look, its eyes are already beginning to go wrong from dirt and neglect. Think of the risk of him losing his sight at this young age. What a cruel fate for a young child just starting life. No games, no fun, a life of misery and dependence. How can you stand seeing your child so dirty, and in such danger of a life of suffering ? ’

‘Stand it ! How can I help standing it ? Doesn’t my religion teach me to suffer my fate in patience ? ’

‘What religion ? ’

‘Christianity, of course. Didn’t you know I was a Christian ? ’

‘Christianity ! That’s no part of Christianity to put

¹ Luke vi. 1-11.

² Acts x. 38.

³ Tim. vi. 12.

up with avoidable trouble and suffering—to neglect one's children and call it patience. That's laziness and fatalism, not Christianity.'



GOING BLIND! WHAT A CRUEL FATE FOR A YOUNG CHILD

'But doesn't the Bible teach us to suffer patiently?'

'The will of God, yes, like Job of old, and like the saints of the New Testament.'

'Then isn't blindness an affliction sent from God to try us?'

'Not the blindness that comes from your failure to keep your child's eyes clean and to wash him daily.'

'Then what is it?'

'A terrible sin for you, which will bring you the life-long remorse of seeing your child grow up with

damaged eyes, and perhaps become totally blind, because *you* neglected it.'

'But what about Christian patience?'

'There you go again mixing up fatalism with patience. Christianity is a fight, all day and every day, against the forces of evil and darkness. Dirt is a devil and the works of this devil are disease and poverty and apathy. Laziness is a devil which produces the sort of home I see here.'

'But we are all so poor here.'

'Poverty is no excuse for dirt, and dirt is one cause of poverty.'

'How is that?'

'It saps your energy and vitality and makes you lazy and careless. Clean people are active, self-respecting, ready to work hard and catch chances of improving their condition.'

'But diseases come from God, don't they, and are to be patiently borne?'

'Patiently borne, yes, but also vigorously tackled and, if possible, cured, and wherever possible equally vigorously avoided. The main causes of disease are laziness, dirt, carelessness and malnutrition. Carelessness in allowing little pools of water to collect, or pots of water to stand, in the monsoon, allows mosquitoes to breed, and that means malaria and all the troubles that come to people wasted by malaria. Dirt brings most of the rest of your troubles, diseases of the eyes, of the skin, of the ears, of the throat, and of the insides, such as enteric, dysentery, cholera and so on. The use of a simple latrine instead of fouling the ground round the village will help to avoid several diseases.¹ Why, the only good village latrines I have ever seen were in the compounds of

¹ Particularly hookworm, a very persistent debilitating disease.

Christians. They were pits several feet across and eight or nine feet deep. They had floors on top with oblong holes in them, and lids. They lasted for years, required very little attention and did not smell.'

'Anyway, we can't avoid malnutrition.'

'You can avoid a good lot of it by learning how to make the best use of the food you can afford. A great deal of malnutrition is caused by ignorance—ignorance of what to grow, what to buy and how to cook it or prepare it for food.'

'Can I learn all this somewhere?'

'You can and must. Ask your padre and his wife for all they can tell you and what they can give you to read, and then study it carefully and act on it.'

'I certainly will but I did not look at Christianity in that way before. I thought it was a religion of peace and . . .'

'Spiritual peace, but a life-long battle against sin, dirt, laziness, apathy, carelessness and selfishness.'

'But Jesus said, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest!"'¹

'Rest for your soul, won daily by a continual fight against evil. It is this very fight that brings the peace you long for. The peace of inaction and apathy is no peace at all. You must not rest till you have done everything possible to make your children clean, healthy and happy, and your home bright and nice. Did not blind Bartimaeus² shout out to Jesus to help him and when the disciples wanted to shut him up he shouted still more. That blind man had faith and energy, and refused to acquiesce in what he believed was curable suffering, and Jesus rewarded him by healing him.'

'That is quite true.'

¹ Matt. xi. 28.

² Mark x. 46-52.

'Remember that acceptance of dirt and of curable or avoidable disease is no part of Christianity. There is an old proverb that says "cleanliness is next to godliness". That not only means that cleanliness is very important but it means that the virtues that bring cleanliness are nearly the same as those that bring godliness, and those who achieve cleanliness are not far from becoming godly.'

'Jesus wants to see your child clean and happy, and your home bright. There is your work in life. "Whatsoever ye do, work heartily, as unto the Lord."¹

IV

All Things are Possible

Having the eyes of your heart enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of His calling, what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what the exceeding greatness of his power towards us who believe, according to that working of the strength of His might which he wrought in Christ.²

'I've told you again and again that we are too poor to do all these things you tell us to,' said an elder to the Stranger when they met outside the village church.

'Well, let us examine this question of poverty,' said the Stranger. 'I am constantly being faced with it and with another complaint, of insufficient food. I agree that there is both poverty, terrible poverty, and malnutrition, terrible malnutrition, but some, at least, of the poverty and underfeeding that I meet could be avoided if we made use of the knowledge and resources that we have, or at least could have, if we stirred ourselves properly to get them. If only we could get rid of the

¹ Col. iii. 23.

² Eph. i. 18-20.

avoidable poverty and underfeeding then we should be more able to tackle the problem of what one might call the hard core of unavoidable poverty and unavoidable malnutrition. But now they are so mixed up that while denouncing those who should be able to do better we are in danger of including some of those who are genuinely unable to help themselves.'

'There are very few of those who could do better here.'



DO YOU WASTE NO TIME ?

'Why are you so sure about that ? Do you do everything possible to improve things ? Do you make use of every bit of knowledge you can get ? Do you search

for knowledge ? Do you waste no time, no money, no manure ?'

'There is nothing to be done that we do not already do,' the man answered at once. 'We waste nothing ; we are too poor to waste anything. We do all we possibly can.'

'Do you remember the story of the sick man carried on a bed to the Great Healer ?'

'What story ?'

'Let me read it to you. Where is your Testament ?'

A Testament was found and the Stranger read out from the Gospel of St Mark.

And they come, bringing unto Him a man sick of the palsy, borne of four. And when they could not come nigh unto Him for the crowd, they uncovered the roof where He was : and when they had broken it up, they let down the bed whereon the sick of the palsy lay.¹

'There's a lesson for you !' he said as he finished.

'How does it apply ?'

'Well, let me tell you. A very sick man had heard of Jesus Christ and he persuaded four of his friends to carry him on his charpoy to where he heard Jesus was. When they got there the whole village was packed with people all trying to see Jesus at the same time. It was just like a big *mela* ! It was quite impossible to get a charpoy with a very sick man on it through that crush. Suppose then that his four friends had put down the charpoy and given the sick man the same answer which you have just given me. Suppose they had just said to the sick man, "Very sorry ! the crowds are too big. There's no hope of getting near Jesus. We've done all we possibly can and it's no use. We'll take you

¹ Mark ii. 3-4.

home again." That's the sort of answer you gave me just now.'

'What more can I do, then?'

'What did those four men do? They got a ladder and ropes, climbed on to the roof, hauled up the sick man on his charpoy, broke a big hole in the roof and let the man down on the charpoy right in front of Jesus. What a surprise for Jesus and His disciples! No wonder He was pleased with them! Now have you done all in your power to acquire knowledge and then to use it, and to use your time and whatever money you can find to improve your condition?'

'I understand you now. No, perhaps I haven't done all that his four friends did for the sick man in St Mark.'

Just then an unwashed child passed with silver earrings and white celluloid bangles, and torn dirty clothes.

'Those ornaments are cheap enough,' said the Stranger, 'but the money spent on them would buy needles and thread or perhaps several knitting needles.'

'But the child loves these ornaments.'

'That's because you've taught her to. Buy needles and cotton and mend her clothes, and keep her well washed and her clothes neat and clean and she'll be just as pleased, and far more fresh and healthy, and so, far more happy too!'

'But we have no soap.'

'You learnt soapmaking at your school. Your wife also learnt knitting. The soapmaking and the knitting which you and your wife learnt at school are talents which you have so far kept buried in the ground instead of using, and for which you will have to give an answer to your Master.'¹

'How can she use her talent of knitting without wool?'

¹ Matt. xxv. 14-30.

'There are plenty of sheep about; can you not get her a few seers of wool so that you and she can clean it and spin some thread? She can then knit warm clothes for the winter. She might even sell some of them, perhaps, if she can spare time to make more than she wants for her own family. Wool can also be woven, and that is a very valuable industry. Can you not learn it and make *pattoo* or tweed cloth and blankets?'

'But we haven't a *charkha*¹ to spin wool on.'

'They don't cost much.'

'But we have no money.'

'How much did you spend on your wedding?'

'About two hundred rupees.'

'Did you spend all of it on buying the necessities for up-to-date home-making and housekeeping? Among necessities I will gladly include a little merrymaking and a few simple ornaments. I don't want to stint your simple joys and pleasures.'

'No, I'm afraid we wasted a lot of what we spent on the wedding. We had a band and fireworks and many guests and a big feast.'

'Some of you farm, don't you?'

'Oh, yes.'

'Do you sow improved seed for all your crops?'

'Some use better seed but not all, and none of us use it for every field and every crop.'

'Why not?'

'We haven't got it and don't know where to get it.'

'Have you asked any one?'

'No one in the village knows.'

'How far have you gone outside the village to inquire?'

¹There is a special wool-spinning *charkha* designed by the Punjab Industries Department.

'We haven't gone out at all.'

'Then you don't know that there is a Government seed agency within ten miles?'

'Ten miles is a long way.'

'Is the journey there more difficult than hauling a sick man on to a roof? Do you sow your cotton in lines?'

'Why should I?'

'It's worth two maunds an acre in increased produce and two maunds is worth more than ten rupees.'

'I never knew that.'

'Then you haven't visited the Government demonstration farm!'

'Where is that?'

'Not more than twenty miles away. Without going there and seeing how they farm there, how can you learn how to get the best out of your fields?'

'No, I have never visited it. That's a very long way off, much further off than even the seed agency and that's too far for us.'

'Then the sick man in St Mark's Gospel was very lucky not to have you among his friends. You would never even have reached the crowd, much less got a ladder and ropes, climbed on to the roof and hauled up the sick man and then broken a hole in it.'

'I'm afraid we are rather slack about these things,' said the elder at last.



NO ONE IN THE VILLAGE KNOWS

'I'm afraid so, too,' said the Stranger. 'The big enemy is not so much poverty as the belief in Kismet or the numbing apathy which poverty brings. People get careless and don't bother. It's all a big circle of ignorance, poverty, malnutrition and apathy, and we have to break into it somehow and create a spirit of self-help, which will fight these devils which oppress us.'

'What do you mean by a big circle?'

'Well, it's this way. Underfeeding produces apathy and slackness, they produce ignorance, and ignorance makes you poor and underfed and so it goes on.'

'Then how are we going to begin?' asked the elder.

'By preaching about it in Church. Jesus Christ came to help those who were oppressed by the devil,¹ and these evils I have described are devils, and the Church is the best place to fight them in.'

'But what can we do about the underfeeding which is so common among the poor?'

'If you do everything possible to grow more and better crops or to earn money in other ways there will be less underfeeding. But there is another cause of underfeeding besides poverty.'

'What is that?'

'There is much underfeeding that is due solely to ignorance. Good food is often cheaper and easier to get than bad food, but people do not know what to give their children and will not bother to find out. Wholemeal flour is cheaper than white flour and far more valuable as food. Polished rice has far less food value than unpolished. And yet people buy white flour and polished rice if they possibly can. Carrots and many other vegetables have far more food value if eaten raw, but even the poorest people usually cook them first. Then

¹ Acts x. 38.

good food is often spoilt by cooking it the wrong way, or too long. One of the best foods is sprouted grain and it is far the cheapest.'

'I never heard of it.'

'I daresay. These things should be taught in every school. But your wife has been trained and she has probably heard about it but has forgotten all about it. If so, she has buried yet another talent in the ground.'¹

'What talent?'

'The talent of knowledge which God allowed her to receive.'

'If the failure to make use of what we were taught is burying a talent then we all bury plenty of talents.'

'I'm afraid that's true of all of us, but where poverty and underfeeding are concerned the punishment for burying talents is terrible, and often falls on our innocent children.

Another way of burying your talents is not to use the good things God has provided for you.'

'What good things?'

'How far away is the hospital or dispensary from here?'

'About three miles.'

'Do you take your sick there?'

'Only when they are very sick.'

¹ Matt. xxv. 18.



SHE HAS BURIED YET ANOTHER TALENT

'And then it is probably too late to save them. Yet another talent wasted!'

'But how can you say that God provided the hospital? It is a District Board Dispensary.'

'Did the devil inspire the opening of hospitals? Was it not Jesus Christ's great mission to heal the sick? And when He sent forth the Twelve and the Seventy, did He not specially tell them to heal the sick?'¹

'Then if the hospital is there by the grace of God, are the Government seed agency and the demonstration farms also talents given us by God?'

'They certainly are, and if you don't use them you will have to answer for your failure to make the best of the blessings you have received. There will be no "Well done good and faithful servant"² for you; you will be beaten with many stripes because you knew what to do but neglected to do it.'³

'Then the hay-box and the ventilators and vaccination—we must as Christians make full use of all these things?'

'You certainly must, and you must be for ever trying to learn more of the various things that will help you to get rid of the devils of poverty, underfeeding and dirt.'

'Dirt, too?'

'Indeed, yes. Dirt is one of the parts of the horrible circle. Dirt brings disease and they both bring the apathy that destroys our souls and our bodies alike. Dirt also brings poverty as it both reduces our desire and our power to work, and much of the dirt of the village if taken to the fields as manure would greatly increase the crops.'

¹ Matt. x. 8; Mark vi. 13; Luke x. 9.

³ Luke xii. 47.

² Matt. xxv. 21-3

'But all these are small things. What real difference will they make?'

'The Sind desert is made of small grains of sand, but still it is a vast area. The whole of life is made up of small things, large numbers of quite small things, and if you attend to them you will soon find a vast change in your life. Remember the same story of the talents "Well done, thou good servant: because thou wast found faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities".¹ Yet another verse for you "He that is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much".² Leave the big things alone and attend to the small ones.'

'I think I understand,' said the man as the Stranger bid him farewell and left the village. 'Poverty cannot be removed by magic or by a miracle. It has to be fought in a hundred small ways, by learning all we can whenever we can and by putting it into practice whenever we can, by wasting nothing whether it is time, money, effort or manure, by making the best use of everything and doing everything the best way possible. And it is all part of our duty to God and to our neighbours. It is all part of the good fight we have to fight against every kind of evil. The Lord Jesus came to help those who were oppressed by the devil and we must use all the help He gives us, and He gives us help in many new ways which hitherto we have not recognized and have not yet tried to use.'

¹ Luke xix. 17.

² Luke xvi. 10.

A Child is Born

'WELL, Samuel, I hear you have had a son born. May I congratulate you! I hope mother and child are doing well. It is a couple of months since the new boy arrived, your wife must be well and strong again by now.'

'I am afraid she is still in bed and ill.'

'I am sorry to hear that. I suppose she went to the Health Centre pretty regularly beforehand? It is only two or three miles away.'

'No, she didn't.'

'What! And you a Christian?'

'What has my being a Christian got to do with it?'

'Everything. You are now bound by a set of rules which should make it impossible for you to do anything so foolish and cruel as not to take your wife to a Health Centre if there is one near enough to reach. Why, it is her first child too! You should have been doubly careful.'

'What rules do you mean?'

'One rule is "thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself".'¹

'Well?'

'Your wife is your neighbour in the Christian sense.'

'I love her without her being my neighbour.'

'If you broke your arm you would go to the hospital, wouldn't you?'

'Yes, of course.'

'But isn't having a baby as serious as that?'

'It seems so now, but I never thought of it like that.'

'You think of yourself then, but not of her. "As ye

¹ Matt. xxii. 39; Mark xii. 31.

would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise".¹

'I called the dai.'

'Was she trained and certificated?'

'I don't know.'

'Didn't you ask her?'

'No.'

'Then you took no trouble whatever. You just left it all to chance, in spite of the rules of your religion that whatever you do you must do with all your might,² —you must do heartily as unto the Lord.³ Do you call the complete neglect of your young wife at such an important time loving your neighbour as yourself and doing your duty as unto the Lord?'

'I never thought of it that way.'

'If your religion is not going to improve your whole life, then what is the good of bothering about religion at all?'

'But there's nothing about Health Centres and trained dais in the Bible.'

'They weren't invented then.'

'Then what has Christianity to do with them?'

'Everything. If God watches over our lives, then every new discovery of the doctors is the gift of God Himself, to be used by us for His glory and for our benefit. Would you put iron girders across your Church to hold up the roof?'

'I certainly would.'

'But iron girders aren't mentioned in the Bible.'

'Then do you mean all these inventions come from God?'

'I mean that if God did not allow it, no invention would ever be possible at all, and it is our duty to make

¹ Luke vi. 31.

² Eccles. ix. 10.

³ Col. iii. 23.

the best use possible of all His gifts and inventions. If there is a Health Centre in the neighbourhood, use it. If the Health Visitor says your wife should go to hospital for her baby, then take her there.'

'But how can she leave home for that?'

'The Mother of our Lord went all the way to Bethlehem in order to obey the laws of the land, just before our Lord was born. Can't you take your wife to hospital to save her health and perhaps her life, and the life of the new baby?'

'That is not our custom.'

'Is your master to be custom or the commonsense that comes from taking Christianity into your daily life? Was it your custom to be a Christian?'

'No, we broke with every custom to become Christians.'

'Why did you do that?'

'Because we were certain Christianity was the truth.'

'Then break with all your other customs when necessary for the same reason. But you said the little baby was ill as well as its poor mother. How is that?'

'I don't know, perhaps it caught cold somehow.'

'That would be difficult with the nice clothes your wife was taught to make at school.'

'It is unlucky to make clothes for a baby before it is born.'

'Unlucky! Are you a Christian at all? How does luck come into Christianity? Is it not your duty to do your very best, and then to leave the rest to God; or ought you to leave everything to chance?'

'But our custom, ——'

'There you go again, putting custom before Christianity. Well, anyway, the Bible does mention baby clothes, as it says that Mary wrapped her child in swad-

dling clothes.¹ So at least you are wrong there, not to have got them ready beforehand. Is your baby vaccinated ?'

'Not yet.'

'Two months old, and not vaccinated ! You are taking a big risk. As soon as it is well enough you must get it done. Or will you refuse to vaccinate it because there is no mention of vaccination in the Bible ?'



VACCINATE THEM EARLY

'No, I will certainly get the child vaccinated.'

'Good. Vaccination is yet another of the gifts of that all-merciful Father whose Son spent His life healing the sick and doing good to others.'

¹ Luke ii. 7.

'If vaccination had been invented in Bible days would Joseph and Mary have vaccinated Jesus Christ?'

'Of course they would; and Mary herself would have gone to the Health Centre, and called in a trained dai. Can't you see the terrible danger of neglecting these things? Suppose your wife died, or got some harm which made her an invalid for life. And supposing your boy was blinded by small-pox, or even merely had his face pitted and scarred by it. Is that loving your neighbour as yourself? Is that helping them to enjoy the abundant life which Jesus Christ came to give? ¹ If you marry and bring children into the world, you are responsible to God that as far as is humanly possible they shall live happy, healthy lives. You cannot sit idle and plead ignorance of these new things now that you are a Christian. Christianity is active, not passive. Jesus told us to ask and we shall receive, to seek and we shall find, and to knock and it shall be opened to us. ² He did not tell us to sit with folded hands waiting for whatever fate may bring. It is in this spirit that the doctors search for and discover vaccination, quinine and all the rest of God's gifts of healing. And in the same spirit you have to look for and to work for whatever will help you and your family to live the full and healthy and happy life which Jesus Christ came to give us.'

The Stranger was just moving away when the bus stopped. It was not very full, and the Stranger said, 'I have an idea, Samuel; come with me and see the hospital and the Health Centre and then next time you'll know where they are and not be frightened to use them. Never mind about the money, I'll pay your fare, it's only an anna.'

In they got and in a few minutes reached the small

¹ John x. 10.

² Matt. vii. 7; Luke xi. 9.

town where the Health Centre and the Mission hospital were. They were shown the Health Centre and saw the lady at work carefully teaching young mothers how to feed and wash and clothe their little babies. Samuel gazed at the scene. At last he said: 'I never knew how complicated a business motherhood was. I will certainly bring my wife here next time.' The Health Visitor heard him and said 'Don't wait till the baby is born, Samuel, bring your wife long before then.'

'When shall I bring her, then?'

'As soon as she knows she is going to have a baby.'

'Why should I? Surely there is nothing to worry about till the baby is due to be born.'

'There may or may not be anything to worry about, but the earlier you come the less likely is there to be anything to worry about later on.'

'Very well,' said Samuel, and they went on to the hospital and saw the loving care with which the sick were treated, the cleanliness in the wards and kitchen, and the skill and patience of the doctor.

Samuel was very impressed. 'Well,' said the lady doctor after showing them round, 'I have had a long day and am very tired, I will say goodbye to you, and go and rest a bit.'

Just as she was turning away she looked at Samuel and said, 'But why did you come here? What makes you interested in our hospital?'

Then Samuel told her about his wife. 'I must see her at once,' said the lady doctor. 'I will come back with you in the bus right away.'

'But you just said you were tired and wanted a rest, said Samuel. 'Please don't bother now.'

'Of course I will come now. What does being tired matter when sick people are wanting help?' And away

they went to catch the bus, while the Stranger made his way out of the town.

VI

*Thy Kingdom Come, Thy Will be Done*¹

'Now, sir,' said a Christian elder when he met the Stranger near the village Church. 'I want to discuss this question of "uplift" with you.'

'Delighted,' said the Stranger, 'as you guess, it is a subject in which I am greatly interested.'

'You say that uplift and Christianity are the same thing.'

'Not quite that,' said the Stranger. 'They are not the same thing, Christianity is far too big a thing for that, but uplift is part of Christianity, or perhaps a necessary consequence of it!'

'How do you make that out? Christianity is concerned with our souls, and uplift with our bodies.'

'That's quite wrong. Both of them are concerned with both bodies and souls, but whereas uplift is only concerned with a part of our bodies and souls, Christianity absorbs the whole of our bodies and souls.'

'What proof have you of that?'

'Well, let us take our bellies first, as being the most important part of our bodies.'

'How can a Christian say that?'

'Well, can hungry people pray or attend to religious teachings?'

'Only with great difficulty.'

'What is the first personal petition in the Lord's prayer?'

¹ Matt. vi. 10; Luke xi. 2.



HUNGRY PEOPLE CANNOT PRAY

“Give us this day our daily bread.”¹

‘What was the first miracle which the Gospel records that our Lord did?’

‘Turning water into wine.’²

‘Not even daily bread. Our Lord did His first miracle to avoid spoiling the enjoyment of His fellow guests, and to save the *izzat* of a friend who had invited Him to a

¹ Matt. vi. 11 ; Luke xi. 3.

² John ii. 1-11.

wedding feast, but had miscalculated the amount of wine required. And what about the feeding of the four and five thousand? ¹ These people would not have starved if Jesus had not miraculously fed them. They were not in what we should call a desert. There were villages all round, the Bible says, although there were none in the immediate neighbourhood, and actually the disciples proposed to send the people away to get their own food. But they were tired, and Jesus to save putting them to any more discomfort performed one of His most wonderful miracles.'

'I agree with you that that settles the question of food. Our daily bread has certainly a place in Christianity.'

'Now listen to this,' and the Stranger pulled out his New Testament and read two verses from the sixth chapter of St Mark.

And when they were come out of the boat, straightway the people knew Him, and ran round about that whole region, and began to carry about on their beds those that were sick, where they heard He was.

And wheresoever He entered, into villages, or into cities, or into the country, they laid the sick in the market-places, and besought Him that they might touch if it were but the border of His garment: and as many as touched Him were made whole.²

'What a wonderful story! Now . . .'

'If Jesus did not consider good health a part of His Gospel would He have rewarded these people for rushing about and collecting all their sick friends and relations?'

'Yes, but then you also want us to consider vaccination and sanitation as part of Christianity.'

¹ Matt. xiv. 15-21, 32-8; Mark vi. 33-44; Mark viii. 1-9; Luke ix. 12-17; John vi. 5-13.

² Mark vi. 54-6.

'Of course I do. If Jesus tired Himself out healing the sick do you not think He would have still more gladly tired Himself out preventing them from getting



'AND AS MANY AS TOUCHED HIM WERE MADE WHOLE'

sick at all, if that had been possible? If Jesus worked early and late to open the eyes of the blind, do you not think He would have preferred that no one should be blind at all, if He could have prevented it?'

'Then why didn't He? He was Almighty?'

'It was not part of His mission to anticipate the discoveries of science. God did not choose to jump nearly two thousand years of slow progress and save mankind the trouble of working out vaccination, chloroform, engines, motor-cars and radio and all the other wonders of modern science. Just as He told us to work out our

own salvation, so we have to work out our own health, and sanitation, and all our other needs. God knows that work is good for us and nowhere does He tell us to be idle or to expect material benefits without working for them. Christianity is the sanctification of hard work and common-sense thinking.'

'Then drains and pits and ventilators, and vaccination and inoculation are all part of the Christian life?'

'Most certainly. It is your duty as a Christian to do your utmost to keep yourself and your family and your neighbours in good health, to learn all you possibly can of the various ways of doing so, to work hard to put these ways into practice and to earn money to buy what is necessary to enable you to do so. The parable of the talents makes that quite clear. If you neglect your health you bury a talent. If you do not make use of what you learn, you bury another talent; if you lose a chance of learning something useful, or let the vaccinator miss your house you bury yet another talent.'

Just then a child came by with a very dirty face, earrings in its ears, and one eye damaged by neglect and dirt. The child looked ill and dull. It looked as if it had never laughed in its life. This started the Stranger off again.

'Jesus said "Suffer the little children, and forbid them not to come unto Me: for of such is the Kingdom of God".'¹ Would Jesus prefer dirty, dull, damaged children, or bright, happy, laughing, healthy children? Won't Heaven be an ugly silent place if it is full of sick, half-blind children? The children in my picture of Heaven are running and playing and singing and shouting.'

¹ Matt. xix. 14; Mark x. 14; Luke xviii. 16.

‘God will heal them all when they get to Heaven.’

‘Yes, but what will God do with those parents whose ignorance or carelessness or laziness spoilt their little lives on earth? Don’t you pray every day ‘Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done?’¹ Do you think it is God’s will that little children should be weak and listless and ill? How can God’s Kingdom come here if the children are dirty and neglected?’

‘I hadn’t thought of it that way,’ said the elder. ‘Do you think we are delaying the coming of God’s Kingdom on earth by letting our children go unwashed and lose their sight and beauty by disease and neglect?’

‘I am certain we are. Jesus wants things nice; bright, clean children, bright, clean homes, with flowers growing outside and pictures on the walls and bright, tidy kitchens, with the pots and pans in neat rows polished to shine. Many of your houses are just as I have described but many are far from being so.’

‘What proof can you give me that Jesus wants things as you have said?’

‘The Old Testament says, “Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might”,² and the New Testament says “Whatsoever ye do, work heartily as unto the Lord”.³ But there is yet another point,’ said the Stranger.

‘What is that?’ asked the elder.

‘You and I are educated,’ said the Stranger, ‘and we have very special responsibility in these matters. Our parents and in some cases our Government have spent money on having us taught and in giving us advantages which many people have not got. If, therefore, we do not spread the light we have received, as well as make

¹ Matt. vi. 10; Luke xi. 2.

² Eccles. ix. 10.

³ Col. iii. 23.

full use of it ourselves, our condemnation will be very severe. "Freely ye received, freely give".¹

'Yes,' said the elder, 'you are right,' and he quoted the very terrible warning given us by St Luke :

And that servant, which knew his Lord's will, and made not ready, nor did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes ; but he that knew not, and did things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. And to whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required : and to whom they commit much, of him will they ask the more.²

VII

A Sower went Forth to Sow

ONE day the Stranger attended the village church, and for the lesson was read the wonderful parable of the Sower.³

The sower went forth to sow his seed : and as he sowed, some fell by the wayside ; and it was trodden under foot, and the birds of the heaven devoured it.

And other fell on the rock ; and as soon as it grew, it withered away, because it had no moisture.

And other fell amidst the thorns ; and the thorns grew with it, and choked it.

And other fell into the good ground, and grew, and brought forth fruit a hundredfold. As He said these things, He cried, he that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

At the end of the service, the Stranger got into conversation with the Padre, and said, 'What a wonderful picture of the farming methods of the olden days that parable is. Seed scattered instead of drilled, and scattered on to land that had been so lightly scratched

¹ Matt. x. 8.

² Luke xii. 47-8.

³ Luke viii. 5-8.

with the plough that the thorn bushes were still there to choke the growing plants.'

'Never mind the methods of farming,' said the Padre, 'it is the lessons that we draw from the parable that count.'

'But don't you think the lessons will have more effect if you link them up with modern life and practice? At present you first have to explain the story itself, as it refers to out-of-date methods of farming, and then you have to explain the lesson.'

'But they still farm like that here.'

'Then what a grand opportunity to teach them both new methods of farming, and a Bible lesson all at once. At each stage of the parable point out the new method and the benefit it will bring and the lesson it teaches.'

'But is that right?'

'If Jesus was telling the parable today, would He describe out-of-date methods of farming?'

'I cannot say, I am sure.'

'Did not those who saw Him working say "He hath done all things well"?¹ Does not the Bible say "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might"?'²

'It certainly does; I see you know your Bible well.'

'I was brought up on it, and thank God I still read it. Then don't you agree that it would be right to make the best use of this parable, both to improve the yield of the fields and thereby get more food for the children, and to teach the people the Word of God as well?'

'Then how would you combine them both?'

'I should begin with the need of preparing the soil for the seed and the use of furrow-turning ploughs, and deep and thorough ploughing. It is no use putting good seed into badly prepared land. Does not that mean very

¹ Mark vii. 27.

² Eccles. ix. 10.

careful preparation to attract the full attention of the people to receive the Gospel Message ?'

'Yes, that sounds correct.'

'Hungry and sick people find it very difficult to listen properly to religious instruction, don't they ?'

'Then that will mean attending to their health and their food and their economic state ?'

'Well, didn't Jesus order us to feed the hungry and heal the sick ?¹ And didn't He go about doing this, until sometimes He must have been so tired that He was ready to drop. What a strain it must have been ! To apply His great power of healing must have meant great concentration and great effort, and however tired He was still they came pestering Him—"Heal me", "Heal my child", "Please heal my little baby". And yet never an impatient word, He healed them all. And we have been told to do the same.'

'What else can we learn of modern methods ?'

'Next we must insist upon the use of good seed, 8A wheat, 518 and 591 wheat, Mollisoni cotton, Coimbatore canes and all the rest. It is worth going a long way and paying a high price to get good seeds for every crop.'

'What do good seeds mean ?'

'The true Gospel. Nothing less. No compromises with evil or superstition or laziness or carelessness or Kismet. The pure Word of God, however far we have to go and whatever trouble we have to face to get it.'

'And then ?'

'The seed must be sown in lines by drills and not scattered broadcast. Sowing in lines is, of course, discipline and good order. Children must be taught clean and regular habits, starting the day they are born. When they can talk, they must learn to speak the truth, and

¹ Matt. x. 8 ; xxv. 34-40.

to keep their tongues clean and pure, and to use no bad or dirty words. They must be taught to pray and to love God. They must learn to work hard and not to waste time by idling. They must learn self-control, of tongue and hand and body. They must learn thrift and saving, how to spend and how not to spend money. This will mean peace, clean villages, happy healthy homes.'

'You are getting a lot out of this parable.'

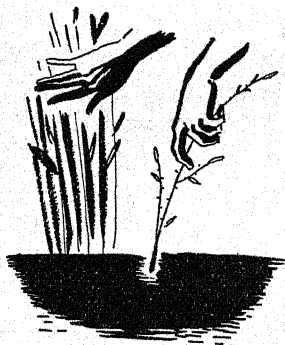
'I haven't finished. The crops must be watered regularly.'

'What does that mean?'

'Regular attendance at church, and a day of rest on Sunday to refresh both body and soul. And lastly there is weeding and "roguing" too.'

'Weeding I know; that must mean getting rid of our besetting sins. But what is "roguing"?''

'Roguing is pulling out plants of other varieties of the crop we have sown, and plants of other crops, so as to keep our seed pure, and reap a full crop of what we have sown. That means again clinging to the pure Gospel and refusing to have anything to do with alternatives, even though they sound easy and harmless. We must follow the truth and not the line of least resistance.'



ROGUING

'All these interpretations are quite simple and clear,' said the Padre, 'and I see no harm in using them.'

'I see great benefit in using them. By attacking

their out-of-date methods of farming, and showing them something better, you will win first their attention, and then their confidence, and they will pay much more attention to what you say about their spiritual farming. In the matter of farming and of many other things you must also remember the order given by God to man of old to "subdue the earth".¹ Surely that means deep ploughing, the removal of weeds and bushes, the destruction of insects and pests, and doing every kind of work by which science and labour will enable us to obtain a better living from nature, whether by farming or by other industries connected with the land or its produce or the minerals beneath it.'

VIII

A Good Turn

'I HAVE just seen a very sad thing,' said the Stranger to the patrol leader of the Boy Scout troop as he greeted him outside the village school.

'Can we help?' said the patrol leader, at once on the alert to do his daily good turn.

'You can and you can't,' answered the Stranger.

'That's a queer answer, sir,' said the patrol leader, and he turned and shouted to his patrol: 'Come along, you fellows; our old friend has got something new to tell us.'

'How do you make that out?' asked the Stranger, as the scouts came dashing up and fell in behind their leader.

'Of course you have,' said the patrol leader. 'You wouldn't give a funny answer like that to a question if

¹ Gen. i. 28.

you hadn't got something in your mind you wanted us to know about.'

'Well, you're right for once,' said the Stranger. 'I have something I very much want to tell you. I have just been to a school where they try and teach blind boys to make a living.'

'There are plenty of blind people in our country, sir.'

'Yes, isn't it terrible! Blind people in every village, and, worst of all, blind children. They'll never be able to play games; they'll never see the yellow mustard fields in spring. They'll never see the flowers in the school garden. They'll never be able to look for birds' nests—it nearly made me cry to see them in the school where they are being trained. One of them was fumbling with a piece of wood and trying to plane it smooth. There they were, half a dozen of them, very slowly, very patiently, trying to train their fingers to take the place of their lost eyes. Their teacher was a blind man, too. They work very slowly, and for a long time they have to be given blunt tools so that they shan't cut themselves. As their fingers get less clumsy, they can be trusted with sharper tools. Isn't it terribly sad? And to think that they need never have been blind at all!'

'What, sir! They needn't have been blind at all! How could their sight have been saved?'

'Easily, boys. Half of them are blind because they were never vaccinated and . . .'

'We are all properly vaccinated here, sir. We can't stay in the troop, or even at school, if we are not done every few years.'

'Splendid! And many of the rest are blind because their mothers never washed their eyes properly when they were small, and they got dirt into them and flies sat on them when they were playing in their filthy vil-

lages. Dirt attracts flies. So to stop people going blind, eyes and faces must be washed regularly with clean



SALT AND WATER IS A GOOD EYE-WASH

water, several times a day and whenever they get any dirt or dust into them. Salt and water (a teaspoon of salt to half-a-seer of water) or cold weak tea are good eye-washes. And remember that eye diseases, particularly when the eyes are red, inflamed or discharging, are terribly catching, so never wash two eyes even of the same child with the same water, the same finger or the same cloth or piece of cotton. Try and keep children with red or discharging eyes away from school and from other children, and take any child with sore eyes, or who can't see properly, to the doctor, as soon as you can : and when you do, listen carefully to what the

doctor says, and try to do it as fully and carefully as you can. And avoid quacks, quack medicines and charms.'

'What a fuss you do make about eyes, sir.'

'Well, God won't give you a second pair if you lose the first, and blind people can neither play nor work in a normal way.'

'That's true enough, sir.'

'Well, try and do all I've told you ; vaccination every five years, clean villages, clean children, clean clothes, clean faces, clean eyes . . . '

'We'll try, sir, we'll try all right, even if our parents don't understand why we do it and don't help us at first.'

'And get rid of smoke from your houses and compounds by fixing chimneys over your *chulahs*.'

'Does smoke damage eyes, sir ? '

'It is very painful and makes them more liable to catch diseases. So have a chimney for every *chulah*, in and outside the house, so as to get rid of it altogether.'

'That's not difficult, sir.'

'And every room must have light and air. People can't be fit and fresh if they sleep in airless rooms. And diseases love dark rooms. You know all about ventilators, I hope ? '

'We certainly do, sir.'

'And bring your little sisters to school so that when they grow up they will get their own children vaccinated, and will always keep their own children's eyes and faces clean, and know how to use a few simple medicines when anything goes wrong with them.'

'Yes, sir, our law says: "A scout's duty is to be useful and to help others".'

'And that law is based on a higher law,' said the Stranger, "thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" and

upon the example of Him of whom it is written "He went about doing good"¹, and who said "whatsoever ye do, work heartily as unto the Lord".



AVOID CHARMS AND QUACKS

'We will talk about all this in Sunday School and at church,' said the Padre, who had been listening to the conversation. 'Whenever we read the wonderful stories of Jesus opening the eyes of the blind we will describe the many ways in which we have now been allowed by God to save people's eyes from ever going blind at all.'

¹ Acts x. 38.

IX

Children's Food

'I WAS talking to your boys, Lambardarji, about what they could do to prevent children going blind.'

'My own sight is failing,' said the Lambardar, 'can you do anything for me?'

'Nothing at all, Lambardarji, except advise you to go to a doctor and get spectacles fitted. It's the children I want to help. It is so cruel to let their eyes go wrong when a little attention will give them a life-time of good sight.'

'Can anything be done? I thought it was just chance whether children's eyes were good or bad.'

'Not a bit. Proper care in childhood will save nine eyes out of ten. Why, I showed all my children's eyes to the doctor just as soon as they were old enough to understand and answer the doctor's simple questions.'

'Why, surely your children's eyes were good enough?'

'They looked so, but I did it to make sure.'

'Well, did you gain anything by the expense?'

'All but one had good eyes. But one's eyes were not right and he had to have spectacles fitted. He hated it, poor little boy, at first, but by the time he was seven, the error had been corrected, he gave up his spectacles and his sight is now perfect.'

'Splendid, but what do you want us to do?'

'Well, if you can afford it, do as I did, and show your children to the doctor as soon as they can understand and answer questions. But apart from that there is lots to do.'

'What is that?'

'Well, I told it all to your boys. Ask them. Ah! here they come back from school. Hullo, boys, I forgot

to tell you one very important thing about eyes. I'll tell you now, while the Lambardar is here so that he too can listen and help you to carry it out. It is very important not only for eyes but for health generally and you can help in a very easy practical way.'

'Very well, sir. If he'll help us, we'll certainly do what you tell us.'

'Well, quite a number of children don't get the right kind of food.'

'That's because their parents are poor.'

'Oh, dear, no. It's as often ignorance or carelessness as poverty. To grow up strong with good eyes and straight limbs, a child requires plenty of milk and lassi, fresh vegetables and, if possible, fruit. If he or she—girls are just as important as boys—does not get them, he will get diseases, his limbs won't be straight, his feet may go flat, his chest may become like a pigeon's and his eyesight may become bad or even be lost altogether.'

'How can we help here, sir?'

'Tell your parents, and see that every child gets as much milk and lassi as possible. Persuade people not to sell milk and ghee till their children have had all they want.'

'I suppose we could grow vegetables and fruit, too, couldn't we?'

'Yes, in your school garden or farm, in a small plot in your courtyard at home for the waste water, and, if you can, use the waste water of drinking-wells for small plots of vegetables, and if your father is a farmer, grow some more in your father's fields.'

'If waste water can be used to grow vegetables, then there is plenty of it in our village. Many houses have handpumps, there are wells, mosques, or other religious buildings; all of these let their waste water run out into

the streets where it now makes black mud and nasty smells, and is a great nuisance to everybody.'

'That would be a splendid way of getting rid of it all.'

'We scouts can easily see to that.'

'And a very good job you will be doing.'

'Are any kinds of vegetables better than others?'

'Yes, in general the green and leafy kinds come first and with them carrots and tomatoes. Then come peas, beans, cucumbers and pumpkins, brinjal, bindi, cauliflower and that sort of stuff. Last come turnips, *mooli*, potatoes and other roots. And grow fruit trees wherever you can. You know them all and they are lovely to eat, and extremely useful for the health of both children and grown-ups. You can grow a small fruit tree or two, perhaps a papaya or a *kaghzi nimbu*, in your courtyard with the waste water from your house.'

'This will be grand, sir; we can all help here.'

'I know a Christian worker in a village who dug three pits in his tiny compound, refilled them with soil and manure and planted vines in them which drank up all the water of his handpump. He has trained them to make a roof for his verandah so that in summer he sits in the shade and in winter in the sun, and he gets a maund of grapes in the season for his family and his sick friends.'

'We'll certainly try to do that too, we will also grow papaya trees.'

'They are an excellent fruit. But won't your father object to your becoming *malis*?'

'He may grumble a bit at first but he does not bother much about what we learn or do at school.'

'And, of course, eggs are good for those who eat them.'

'Then we will keep fowls, sir.'

'Excellent; and remember to use whole-meal flour



SHADE AND A MAUND OF GRAPES A YEAR

from the flour-mill and not white flour, and don't polish your rice.'

'Father thinks white flour and white rice are "gentlemanly".'

'They have that idea in my village too! It is quite wrong, and you must fight against it, boys. All these old ideas and customs which bring poverty and ill-health are wrong. Many people think that high caste and educated people should not work with their hands. Many think that growing vegetables is wrong. Still more people will not help to keep the village clean by

working themselves. All these notions are out of date and wrong. All hard work is right and good. God intended us to work hard, and He said so, soon after He created the world, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread".¹

So remember always that hard work is honourable, hard work is Christian. You might make a proverb that "the sweat of the farmer is the best irrigation". The more work you put into the land, the more crops you will take out of it. The more work you put into cleaning your home and your village, growing fruit and vegetables, the healthier you will all be.'

'We will, sir,' said the scouts. 'Those old rules and customs do not bother us as much as they do our parents.'

'And always remember to grow fruit; that's another useful food. And don't let your mothers cook things too long. In general, the more things are cooked, the less becomes their value as food.'

'Our mothers know all about that, sir.'

'Good, but I don't suppose they know about the hay-box. That helps both to save cow-dung for manure and to get rid of smoke. The hay-box gives you more ghee, a chatak or more extra to every seer of ghee you make, and hay-box ghee and hay-box lassi have more food value, because they have not been burnt while simmering on the dung-cake fire. Green vegetables must also be cooked in the hay-box as they lose much of their good value if cooked in an open pot.'

'We'll soon make hay-boxes and teach our parents to use them. If we have hay-boxes we can get warm water in the morning to wash in without having to get up early and light the fire.'

¹ Gen. iii. 19.

'And see that you and all the other children get a good meal before leaving home for school and take a good meal with you to school.'

'We'll try, sir, but that may be difficult.'

'Tell your parents about *missi roti*.'

'What's that?'



'IN THE SWEAT OF THY FACE SHALT THOU EAT BREAD'

'Mix whole-meal wheat flour with a little gram flour. Knead it up with onions, *methi* or other green leaves, milk, salt and ghee or butter. Then make it into good thick milk chapatis.

'Sprouted gram—eaten raw—is also a good food. Eat it with *gur* to make it taste nicer. Try all the grains—cereals and pulses. Make them sprout and then see which tastes nicest, and how much sprouting is best, and whether *gur* or salt is nicer; but don't cook them. Eat them raw.'

'That will be fun. But you seem to know so much about these things, I suppose you do the cooking in your home, sir?'

'No, I don't. My wife and I each know our own jobs.'

'Then why do you bother us with them?'

'Till your sisters go to school and learn these things I've got to. Otherwise you'd never learn them at all. That's the worst of cutting off half the population—and the more important half too—from all useful knowledge, by not sending all the girls to school, as well as the boys. So be sure that your sisters all go to school.'

'Very well, sir. You've given us plenty to do but most of it is not very difficult.'

'Then get on with it; light and air, vaccination and revaccination, cleanliness, good food, clean water to drink, girls' education, and take any bad eyes you find to the doctor. And remember to use all waste water, from kitchen, washing place, well, street, mosque or anywhere else, to grow vegetables or fruit. All over India there is enough waste water to grow what we call the protective foods—that is fruit and vegetables which protect our health—for many millions of people who are now not getting them. And you, Padre Sahib, when you read in Sunday school and church the wonderful stories of Jesus opening the eyes of the blind, remember to describe all the ways in which Jesus has now allowed us to prevent people ever going blind at all. Tell them also how cataract can be removed and sight restored. Perhaps when Jesus said, "He that believeth in me the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do",¹ He was referring to the prevention of blindness and other diseases which in due course He was

¹ John xiv. 12.

going to enable us to achieve, by means of the great discoveries of modern science which God in His goodness has allowed us to make.'

X

Whatsoever ye do, do all to the Glory of God

THE Stranger was walking through the fields with some villagers and found many *akh* bushes growing in the crops. Some fields were full of weeds; the cotton was not sown in lines; the corners of the fields were unploughed, and the furrows not straight; the banks built to hold up the rain water were broken and neglected.

'There is a lot of money wasted here,' he said to his companions. 'If the cultivator of this field had done his work properly he would have got another dozen rupees from every acre he farmed.'

'That was done by servants,' said one of the villagers.

'What difference does that make?' asked the Stranger.

'The master never comes here. He'll never see.'

The Stranger was silent, and they all walked on towards the village. The school was the first place they passed. Outside the wall of the school compound was a litter of paper and rubbish.

'How untidy!' said the Stranger to the schoolmaster.

'Oh, no one will see it there,' said the master. 'The inspector never looks outside the school playground.'

The Stranger went on towards the village, and outside the walls of the compounds were heaps of rubbish.

'Still more dirt and filth and untidiness!' he grumbled to no one in particular. 'And waste, too,' he



NO ONE WILL SEE IT THERE !

added. 'Put into a pit for the crops it would be turned into gold.'

'Who'll see it there?' said several. 'The compounds are quite clean.'

And so they were, quite nice and tidy. Then the Stranger saw some carpenters working and watched them for a bit. Looking at a cupboard they were making he found some extremely bad workmanship.

'Look at this,' he said to one of the carpenters. 'You surely aren't going to pass that?'

'What does that matter? Who'll see it there?' said the carpenter.

The Stranger could stand it no longer.

'God will see it there,' he blurted out in a loud and angry voice.

Everyone was aghast at such an amazing notion. Before they could recover, the Stranger went on:

'Look here, friends,' he said, 'wherever I go I find slovenly, slipshod work. In the fields, in the school, in the workshop, in the home. Nothing matters as long as it won't be noticed. You lose money by bad workmanship and bad farming, you lose health by carelessness in allowing dirt and waste to collect. That is bad enough. But what is far worse, you are losing character, your moral fibre is being weakened, you are losing self-respect by having no pride in your work. In the old days,' said the Stranger, 'people used to talk about working to the glory of God. The old buildings we still admire, the old pictures that are still priceless, the silver vessels, the wooden furniture that we treasure in our museums were all made for the glory of God. The craftsmen of those days took a pride in their work. By doing good work they worshipped God. Look at the flowers, the birds, the trees, the butterflies. They are

all God's handiwork; and what beautiful workmanship. "Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these".¹ In the first chapter of Genesis we are told that when God created the world he kept stopping to see if the workmanship was good.² No less than five times we are told that God saw that it was good. How often do we stop to look at our work and see if it is good enough, not merely for us and our employers, but for God Himself to see? And when He had finished "God saw everything that he had made and behold it was very good".³ There is nothing slipshod about the work of God. And if we are His servants there should be nothing slipshod about ours either. Does not St Paul say, "Whatsoever ye do, in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him".⁴ How can we do slack work in the name of the Lord Jesus, and how can we thank God for bad workmanship?'

'Yes, but we are poor people,' said several.

'Of course, you are, and one big cause of all poverty is the absence of ambition, the absence of a desire to do good work for its own sake, for the glory of God. Good workmanship brings progress, self-respect, promotion. Good work well done brings us a glow of pride and well-being which is good for us and leads us to still better and higher things. Good work brings us nearer God, and wins His *shabash*.

'There is a glory about good workmanship, whether it is a straight furrow, a well-hoed field, a clean and tidy school or house, a well-made cupboard or shoe or plough, a neatly sewn shirt, or a clean tidy child. Many a man who has made his fortune, as they say, only did so because

¹ Matt. vi. 29; Luke xii. 27.

² Gen. i. 10, 12, 18, 21, 25.

³ Gen. i. 31.

⁴ Col. iii. 17.

he made his work his hobby and did good work for the sake of doing it. Many a man has earned a good job by putting his heart into his work and taking a pride in doing it well.

'When I was a boy I used to watch a carpenter at work near our school. He was a noted craftsman. He loved his work, his tools and his wood, and they seemed to respond; so firm and yet so delicate was his touch, that the wood seemed to have no difficulty in shaping itself as he wanted. All his angles and his joints were exact—no bad workmanship was allowed.



A CRAFTSMAN WHO LOVES HIS WORK

'Many years later I watched another craftsman—a craftswoman this time—my own wife. There can be no more skilled craftsman in the world than a trained and skilful mother handling her children. It is a beautiful sight and a lesson to watch her, whether she is feeding them—breast or bottle or at table—whether she is changing their "nappies", washing, dressing, tidying, disciplining them or playing with them, or doing first aid for their cuts and bruises.

'Child management is one of the most complicated

crafts in the world. The skilful mother combines love and gentleness with the firmness necessary for training them in character; she is patient, but works swiftly enough to avoid tiring her child. Her movements are sure with the confidence that knowledge and practice alone can give, and they give confidence to her child.

'Yes, a good craftsman is a pleasure to watch, whether a farmer ploughing, a mother handling her children or a carpenter making a table. And they all have to learn their crafts by hard and patient work. Good craftsmanship is good Christianity; "whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might". The Saviour of the world was brought up in the home of a carpenter.'

'What is the use of all that to us poor people?' again asked the villagers.

'Sorry, friends, I'm afraid I was talking to myself! But anyhow you've got to work, so why not take a pride in good workmanship and earn the better money that it brings? Why not enjoy what you have to do instead of looking about for excuses to stop and taking every opportunity to do it badly? Why not do your job so that when it is done you can be proud of it and can truly say "that job of work is fit even for God to see"? That is the way to enjoy life and work, the way to earn good money and good promotion. Many of your housewives keep their little homes perfectly—walls regularly plastered, brass pots in a shining row, everything clean, neat and tidy—and aren't they proud of them! That is good craftsmanship and pleases God. Every home must be like that.

'Some of us are, by nature, more skilful than others. But we can all do something if we try hard, and we are responsible to God for doing our very best with whatever strength and skill and knowledge He has given

us. We are stewards. We have received talents and we must put these talents to the best use possible. Our brain, the skill of our hands, our education, our health, our time and our money, our land or possessions, whatever we have is given us in trust to use for the glory of God and the good of our fellow-men. We must lose no opportunity of learning and of practising what we learn and of developing whatever skills and talents we possess.

‘As a boy, I found I had a natural talent for drawing. I was offered lessons, but was too lazy to take them. I have completely lost that talent! There is no place in Christianity for laziness or idleness, or for gossiping when we should be working, for doing short work or slack and slovenly work. Put your heart into your work and it will never let you down. Never be satisfied with “Why bother, no one will ever see it”. Accept nothing but the best from yourself. That is the way to progress and prosperity, but more important, it is the way to self-respect and a strong character. “Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.” Let us plough straight furrows to the glory of God. Let us make good shoes to the glory of God. Let us work heartily as unto the Lord; whether it is housekeeping, knitting, mending clothes or washing a child, let it be done well, to the glory of God.’¹

¹ Cor. x. 31.

XI

Gathered Together

Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.¹

'So I have come just in time for a Service, I see,' said the Stranger, as he entered a large room at the school, and found fifteen or twenty men, and two or three women sitting facing a table on which were some books and registers, and behind which were several of the village elders.

'No, indeed you haven't,' said his neighbour, as he invited the Stranger to take a seat.

'Well, what is it?' asked the Stranger.

'It is a meeting of our Co-operative Credit Society.'

'What of it?' asked the Stranger. 'There is a famous and encouraging verse in the Bible which says, "wherever two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them".'

'Yes, but this is just a Co-operative Credit Society meeting, not a religious service.'

'But you are gathered together in the name of Jesus Christ?'

'How can we be?'

'But you are here to help each other, and to help yourselves, to improve your manner of living? Has not your committee met to do what it can to serve all the other members and their families?'

'But what has that to do with Jesus Christ?'

'Did He not tell us to serve one another?'² Did He not on the eve of His Crucifixion gird Himself, take a towel and water, and wash His disciples' feet, telling them

¹ Matt. xviii. 20.

² Matt. xx. 27-8; xxiii. 11; Luke xxii. 26-7; Mark x. 43-5.

to do to each other as He did to them ? ¹ Did He not say "whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them" ? ² And also, does not the Bible tell us to "do all to the glory of God" ? ³



DID HE NOT TELL US TO SERVE ONE ANOTHER ?

'Yes, but that is religion, and this is Co-operative Credit.'

'Where is the difference ? What is the use of religion if it is something separate from our daily life ? If religion is only something that you put on on Sundays,

¹ John xiii. 4-15.

² Matt. vii. 12.

³ Cor. xi. 31.

like your best clothes, why bother about it? Surely religion must be something to help you all day and every day, too, something you can call upon to stand by you when things go wrong, and not merely to think about on Sundays?’

‘How can it come into a Co-operative Society?’

‘It can come in every way. First it can make you do your best to learn the principles of co-operation, as they are very much the principles of Christianity—self-help and mutual help.’

‘Mutual help you have explained. Where does self-help come in Christianity?’

‘Everywhere. “God helps those who help themselves” is not a Bible saying, but are we not told to “ask and it shall be given you, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened”? What is that but self-help? When does the Bible tell you to do nothing and hope for the best?’

‘Nowhere that I know of.’

‘Christianity is full of self-help. It is a fight against evil and a search after good. It is action throughout.’

‘Yes, but that is all said about spiritual things, not worldly things.’

‘There you go again locking up your Christianity in the church on Sunday evening. Our whole life must be Christian. You remember the three most difficult miracles to explain to our non-Christian friends?’

‘Why, which are they?’

‘The turning of the water into wine, and the feeding of the two multitudes of four and five thousand people.’¹

¹ Matt. xv. 32-8; xiv. 15-21; Mark vi. 35-44; viii. 1-9; Luke ix. 12-17; John ii. 1-11; vi. 5-14.

'Well, what of them?'

'They are all concerned with what you would call the very unreligious matters of hunger and food.'

'Well, we must eat, or we shall die, and God does not want us to die needlessly.'

'Exactly. You have got it at last. God wishes us to live, and not merely to live but to live abundantly. "I came that they may have life, and may have it abundantly".¹ "In Him was Life."² For this reason Jesus performed miracles of healing, for this reason He produced food by miracles. Christianity is our daily life.'

'But still, where does the Co-operative Society come in?'

'Jesus said, "I came that they may have life, and may have it abundantly". Without the Co-operative Society you will be poor and hungry, unable to help either yourselves or other people, unable to buy medicine and books, unable to maintain your church and to help your neighbours. Will life be more abundant with or without the Co-operative Society?'

'Why, with it, of course.'

'Not only will you all be better off by the effort of this Co-operative Society, but you will learn the lesson of thrift, of unselfishness, of discipline and of mutual help. You will have the privilege as a Committee Member of working unpaid for the good of your village, and of your neighbours. All very valuable spiritual lessons. You will learn to subordinate your private interests to those of the village or of some poorer brother.'

Just then another member who had been watching these two talking together so vigorously, came up and asked what the argument was.

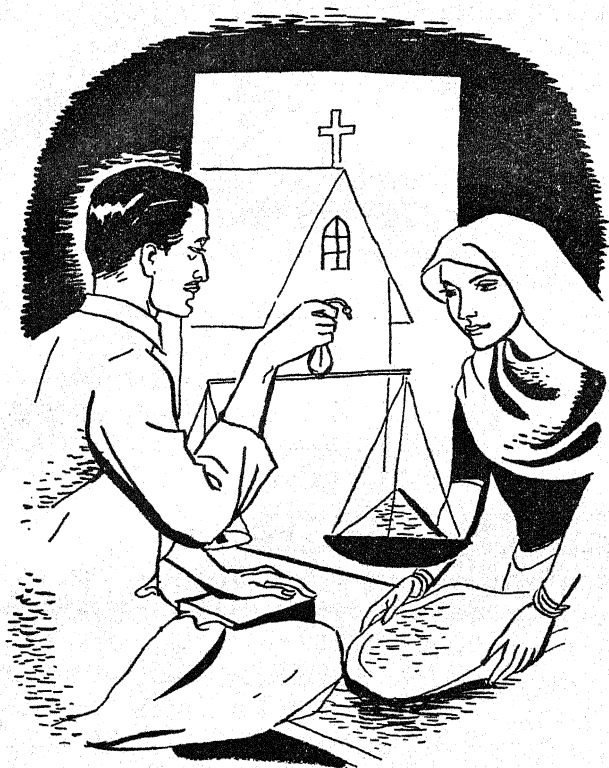
'I have been trying,' said the Stranger, 'to convince

¹ John x. 10.

² John i. 4.

my friend here that you can't keep co-operation out of religion, or rather religion out of co-operation.'

'What an idea!' said the newcomer. 'What on earth can religion have to do with a Co-operative Society?'



BUSINESS IS PART OF RELIGION

'Everything,' said the Stranger. 'I had just convinced my friend when you came up, but I see I shall have to start all over again. Look here, will you answer me these questions?'

'Certainly.'

'Is God interested in our daily life?'

'Of course He is.'

'What is the most important part of daily life?'

'Food.'

'The next most important thing?'

'Health.'

'Can you have either without attending to the economic side of life?'

'No.'

'Is there a better way of helping the economic side of life than a good Co-operative Society?'

'No.'

'Then what?'

'But how can good business be combined with good religion?'

'Why not? Good business for a Co-operative Society means honesty, punctual payments of loans, discipline, self-control, the thrifty use of money, and the checking of all waste, extravagance and vice. Is there anything irreligious in all that?'

'No, but if a member defaults . . .'

'That is where your Society and your religion will help each other. The duty of the Society is to teach, train, encourage, warn and generally shepherd its members until they are good co-operators and good businessmen. The Society has to teach business methods to thriftless, careless people. Co-operation in fact helps you to do your Christian duty of bearing one another's burdens.¹ Surely the best way of easing a burden is to teach and help the bearer of it to get rid of it altogether?'

'But if a member asks for a loan, and we know he is thriftless and most unlikely to repay it?'

'Did not Jesus Christ say "according to your faith

¹ Gal. vi. 2.

be it done unto you"?¹ We are treated according to our merits. I cannot believe He would approve of throwing away poor peoples' money on spendthrift people. He would devote Himself to trying to teach the spendthrift better ways.'

'But religion . . .'

'Ah, I think I see your trouble. To you religion and God are not quite the same thing. Religion is a matter of beliefs, forms and ceremonies connected closely with God, but less closely with your daily life.'

'Well, perhaps what you say of our idea of religion is partly correct.'

'Then your idea of religion is wrong. The truth is that religion is merely the machinery for bringing God into every corner of your daily life. If your religion does not bring God into your daily life, into your work and into your play, into your joy as well as your sorrow, then it is not true religion at all and is not worth having.'

'I think we both understand you now,' said the newcomer, 'but just look at today's agenda. There is a proposal to put last year's profits into the common-good fund. It is followed by a proposal to spend the common-good fund either on repairing the church, or on buying quinine, and selling it at reduced rates to the poor. Then there is an alternative proposal to distribute last year's profits in a dividend to the shareholders. On your principles how shall we decide these questions?'

'How can I advise you? I am not a member, and I do not know the needs and circumstances of your members, or the financial state of your Society. All I can say is that your Co-operative Society is just as much a part of your Christianity as your church is. Both are

¹ Matt. ix. 29.

means of enabling you to have the fuller life which Jesus Christ came to bring to you. You must thrash out your social and economic problems on Christian lines. You must decide whether quinine is more necessary than repairing the church; whether if malaria comes and there is no quinine, it will not make many people so ill that they will neither be able to earn their living or go to church. Perhaps there will, with great effort, be money for both. But your meeting is just going to begin, and as I am not a member I must disappear. Good-bye to you, and good wishes for a useful and harmonious meeting.'

'Good-bye, and thank you, sir. After all you have said I think it would be wise and useful if we started our Society meeting with a short prayer to remind us all exactly how we stand, and what our duties are to God, to our neighbours and ourselves. If Jesus is not in the midst of a Christian Co-operative Society, then obviously it cannot be a good society. Will, you, sir, before you go, offer a prayer for us and our Society?'

'O God our loving Father in Heaven, who didst send Thy only Son that we might have a more abundant life, be with us now. We have met together in Thy name as a Co-operative Society, and claim Thy promise to be in the midst of us. Help us to discuss everything in a spirit of brotherhood and to make wise decisions. Teach us our duty to Thee, and to our neighbour. Take from us selfish thoughts and motives. We thank Thee for Thy great gifts of science and discovery. Show us how we may help each other to use them to win our daily bread and to keep ourselves and our families in good health. Teach us to be thrifty, to work hard. Teach us to conduct our business without harshness, without greed, and without trying to get the better of each

other. Show us how to order the affairs of this Co-operative Society in such a way that this means of material betterment which Thou has granted us may also be a means of bringing Thy Kingdom nearer to our home and villages. May everything said and done at this meeting be said and done to Thy glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.'

XII

*Our Daily Bread*¹

A CONFERENCE of Christian leaders was being held at a central town and there was much discussion about the poverty of Christians and how they were to make a living. One man said that the Christian community was not a cross-section of the general population, with its rich men, professional men, landlords and tenants, its shopkeepers and artisans and menials; the Christians were almost all poor, some very poor. Many had previously been village servants, and although their status as such was very low they were at least kept alive by the villagers; now they had often lost even that maintenance, and had gained no profession by which they could earn their living otherwise than by village service. Our Stranger was present, and was listening intently to all that was said.

'The Lord will provide,'² said one speaker.

'Yes, but the same Bible says that "if any will not work neither let him eat",'³ said another.

'We pray daily "Give us this day our daily bread",'⁴ said a third.'

¹ Matt. vi. 11; Luke xi. 3.

³ 2 Thess. iii. 10.

² Gen. xxii. 8, 14.

⁴ Matt. vi. 11; Luke xi. 3.

'Yes,' said the Stranger, who now joined in, 'but no one who utters that prayer ever really believes that if he sits idle food will drop into his mouth. You might as well trust in God and walk in front of an express train. God helps those that help themselves.'

'That does not come from the Bible,' said another.

'No, but it very well expresses the meaning of the Bible in this matter,' said the Stranger. 'There is nothing passive about Christianity. We are told to ask, seek, knock,¹ to run a race,² to arm ourselves³ and fight.⁴ We are ordered to do our job with all our might.'⁵

'Yes, but didn't Jesus twice feed thousands of people by miracles?'

'Yes,' said the Stranger, 'but only because it was an out-of-the-way place; Jesus Christ had led the people there and they were tired and hungry and a long way from their homes. Where effort could achieve something. He demanded it.'

'How do you say that?'

'When Peter had toiled all night and caught nothing Jesus did not just sympathize with him and produce food miraculously, He told him to push off again, well out into the deep water, and have another try. The only help He gave him was to tell him where to throw his net.'⁶

'Well, where are we Christians to throw our net to make a living nowadays?'

'Well, the first thing is to take advantage of everything which by God's grace has been provided.'

'What do you mean?'

'Well, there is land.'

'But we Christians own no land and can buy none.'

¹ Matt. vii. 7.
⁴ 1 Tim. vi. 12.

² Heb. xii. 1.
⁵ Eccles. ix. 10.

³ Eph. vi. 11.
⁶ John xxi. 3-6.

'You need not own land to be a farmer. There are lakhs of tenants making a living in the Punjab.'

'But no one will take us as tenants.'

'Oh yes they will. No really good farmer ever went long without a tenancy.'

'But we aren't good farmers, most of us.'

'Yes, that's the trouble ; you must learn farming. You must learn to work early and late, and to use your brains as well as your muscles to improve the soil and to win crops from it.'

'Where can we do that ?'

'That is more difficult. But for a start your leaders must try and organize the teaching of farming in those villages where Christians do own land. You must send some of your best boys to Lyallpur College, and to the Allahabad Mission College. You must teach it in your Christian schools, and learn it wherever you can in other schools.'

'Is there anything possible besides farming ?'

'Plenty of things. There are two industries going begging, wool-processing and poultry-keeping. Oh, and a third, too, and a fourth, silk and, in the hills, modern bee-keeping. None of these require much land.'

'Can you describe these possibilities in some detail ?'

'There are four million sheep in the Punjab, but nearly all their wool is sold, dirty and unsorted, at a few annas a pound. It could be cleaned and sorted, one industry ; dyed, another industry ; spun, a third industry ; knitted, a fourth industry ; or woven into blankets or tweeds and cloth, a fifth industry. As it is, except for the big Dhariwal and Lalimli mills and a few places where carpets are made, and a little knitting done here and there, all our woollens and blankets and hosiery and tweeds are imported from outside. We sell wool raw at

a few annas and buy it back processed at many rupees a pound. There's work for your whole community.'

'How has it come about that this industry is going begging?'

'There is an Industries Department of Government which has recently devised a very cheap *charkha* for spinning wool. Previously wool could not be spun in villages. Now it can. The Veterinary Department will teach you how to shear sheep and to sort wool. The Industries Department will teach you many industries; it has schools and experts and advisers of all kinds waiting to be used.'

'And, what about the other industries you mentioned?'

'Poultry-keeping is dominated by disease, but Government is working at that, and meanwhile disease can be greatly diminished by keeping the fowls properly. That and all else that you need know about them can be learnt at many Government and other kinds of poultry farms all over India.'

'Yes,' said some one at the back of the hall, 'but if we keep good poultry the headman will take the eggs and the birds for the next official who visits the village, and pay us nothing.'

'That is a difficulty, but we can overcome that if we persevere.'

'I hope and believe so,' said the Chairman, 'as that is here and there a really serious complaint.'

'The Agricultural Department,' went on the Stranger, 'will also teach you bee-keeping, fruit-preservation and lots of other things. There is the Industries Department, as I said, which will teach you all about silkworms and silk-processing, and about every other possible craft, trade and industry. The selling of cloth and



THE HEADMAN WILL TAKE THE EGGS

vegetables, such like things will bring a living to some. Some people can make a living by dealing in hides, skins, bones and wool. Some can deal in cattle and sheep. Some can work as agents to butchers. There is tanning and leather work ; both can be learnt at Government schools. No Christian need be afraid of leather work, it is a splendid industry, particularly if carried on by the new methods taught by Government, and if those who carry it on join together in a Co-operative Society.

'It seems,' said the Chairman, 'that the industries are there and that Government is ready to teach us how to practise them. What is wanting is our co-operation to make the best use of these facilities and opportunities.'

'How can Christians keep sheep when they have no land?' asked a voice from the back.

'They needn't keep sheep,' said the Stranger. 'They can buy wool straight off the sheep's back.'

'How can they buy without money?'

'And how can they learn to practise any other industry without money?'

'You evidently have never heard of the Co-operative Department,' said the Stranger. 'Co-operation was invented to raise poverty-stricken and debt-laden people to independence and prosperity.'

'Has it ever done so?'

'Yes, in millions of cases, both in the countries of its origin and even in India. It has been less successful in India for want of some of the qualities and virtues which you Christians ought to be able to provide.'

'What are they?' asked some one.

'Mutual trust, common honesty and unselfishness.'

'But who is to teach all these things?'

'Your teachers and padres must be able to do this,

until you can afford special people for it. Why not ask your Missions when they recruit workers from Europe and America to recruit co-operative experts, to recruit craftsmen, men who know how to farm, how to keep bees, sheep, and poultry, how to work in wood, leather, iron, how to process wool and cotton, how to organize co-operative societies ?'

'That's a good idea,' said many, but some seemed to think that divinity scholars were more necessary.

'You don't mind recruiting doctors and school teachers,' said the Stranger. 'Why do you object to these other specialists? Surely you have no right to pray for daily bread if you have no intention of taking every possible step to obtain it? But I have another suggestion.'

'What is that?' asked several.

'You remember that St Paul was a tentmaker and did not think it wrong to combine tentmaking with the preaching and spreading of the Gospel?'

'That is correct. How does that apply to us?'

'Well, after our Lord Himself, St Paul did more than any one else to lay the foundations of the Christian religion and church. If it was right for him to combine that tremendous work with the earning of his living by tentmaking, surely there would be no harm if every village pastor, catechist and mannad were a practising expert at some trade or calling? He could earn his own living and teach others his trade for five days a week and do his Gospel work in the evenings of those days and on the whole of the other two days. How else is a poor community ever going to earn its living and support a church? At present, your church is so short of staff that parish work, as it is known in the West, is almost impossible, and that is one reason why the community

is so backward in worldly, as well as in spiritual things. In every country the foundations of what we call "village uplift" were largely laid by the country clergy and their wives and daughters. The same might happen here if all your Church workers had a thorough grounding in village uplift and could teach and practise a profession, as well as do Gospel work.'

'That is worth considering,' said the Chairman of the Conference, 'but we cannot give a decision at once.'

'The sooner you do, the better,' said the Stranger. 'Things are going from bad to worse economically, what with the natural increase of the Christian community, and the rapid recruiting of new converts.'

'But we fear that the efficiency of the ministry will suffer.'

'Surely a minister who keeps a store of good seed for issue to farmers, who keeps simple medicine, or who knows and practises and can teach a craft will command more respect than one who just lives in a very poor community and gives no economic help at all and can take no practical interest in the people's health and livelihood. You will surely admit that in a country where doctors are so scarce in the villages, every minister should know "first aid". Where poverty and ignorance of crafts are the next two biggest problems, surely the minister must be able to give help here, too. In a country where so many people beg their living in the name of religion, would it not be right for the Christians to start a new tradition, particularly when we have the very same problem solved in this way by no less an authority than St Paul?'

'Your arguments are very persuasive,' said several of those present. 'If some ministers could advise about crops and issue good seed, and others could teach one

or other of the various crafts, there would be far less poverty and helplessness and much more self-help and mutual help in our community.'

'But I have yet another idea. What about the co-operative organization, which I have already mentioned?'

'How will that help?'

'Well, I have suggested the solution of one of your big problems, teaching. Other problems are marketing, finance and the supply of raw material and new designs. If your community was organized co-operatively, all this could be done.'

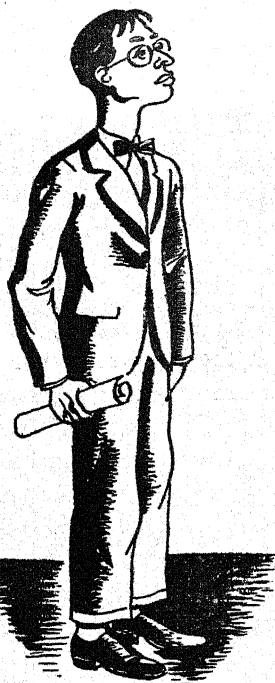
'Can co-operation be combined with a Christian church?'

'Nothing easier. The principles of co-operation are included in Christianity, self-help, mutual help and fair business. Every school teacher and every preacher should know the principles of co-operation. You Christians have the very big advantage over other communities of already having a well-articulated organization. You have head offices in big centres, closely connected with your branches in the smaller towns and the villages. These head offices can organize marketing, advertising and credit, they can collect and distribute information and keep the workers provided with all kinds of assistance, new designs and everything else. Why should not every minister and worker be a trained co-operative organizer?'

'All that seems to be wanted,' said the Chairman, 'is initiative and drive. They are also Christian virtues and we must provide them.'

As you Sow, so shall you Reap

THE Stranger was sitting in his house getting ready to address a meeting when a visiting card was brought to him. It had on it—Mr Samuel Masih, B.A. (Hons). The Stranger was too busy to see him at once and suggested that he should return after the meeting. Sure enough, in the evening another card was brought,—B.A. (Hons) again written large after the name.



MR SAMUEL MASIH, B.A. (HONS)

In came Mr Samuel. He was a young man obviously fresh from college, and the Stranger congratulated him on his honours degree.

'What can I do for you?' he asked after they had settled down.

'I am in trouble,' said Samuel. 'I have, as you have noticed, a splendid degree, but all the employment I have got is a clerkship on Rs 35 a month in the Post Office. My parents have a big family still to educate, and I can give no help on such a small salary. Besides, my degree is worth far more than that.'

'What subjects did you take for your degree?'

'Philosophy.'

'They tell me there are only two books to learn by

heart for a philosophy degree, and that is why it is so popular.'

'That is not correct; besides, the professor of my college told me that I should take philosophy.'

'Quite right. Philosophy is a wonderful study. Once you have learnt it you live in a barrel like Diogenes, or in a hut on the top of a hill, and the cares and troubles of the world melt away like morning mists in the sunshine of ethereal contemplation. What does it matter to you if they pay you Rs 35 a month or Rs 350? Philosophy has cured you of all that worry and struggle.'

'But my father has a big family to bring up.'

'That matters nothing to a philosopher! Only the other day I met a Sadhu who had not seen his wife and children for twenty years. Shortly after I met another who was transferring all his land to his heirs. Philosophy is the end of all family troubles.'

'But I want to marry and have a family myself and I want to help my father with his family.'

'Then why on earth did you touch philosophy? Why did you not take chemistry or electricity or medicine or engineering or agriculture, or one of the many other subjects belonging to the common work-a-day world? India is working day and night to expand her industries; every trained man is wanted; schools and classes and courses are being opened all over the country to train young men for the many professions crying for skilled workers. Why, even the training stipend for a bright lad is often bigger than the whole wages you are earning as an "Honours" philosopher. At the present moment, the mill, the workshop, the factory, the drawing office, the repair shed, the power house, the engine foot-plate are the places for such as you with families to support.'

'But my professor advised me.'

'Then your professor also lives in Diogenes' tub!'

'What am I to do, then?'

'What age are you?'

'I am twenty-three.'

'You are old to start again but I see no other hope for you. A philosophy degree is practically valueless in the labour market. If you can possibly afford to do so I suggest that you take a technical course of some kind that will enable you to find work in one of the many industries that are now expanding at such great speed. India produces coal, iron, wool, cotton, leather, silk, oil and many other raw materials upon which vast and prosperous industries can be and are being founded.'

'Which shall I take and where shall I go?'

'I am no industrialist, myself.'

'Then whom shall I consult?'

'Not Diogenes at any rate. Go to some practical man, to an industrialist or to the principal of a school which is training lads for industry.'

The philosophy B.A. (Hons) got up to go away—a sadder and, perhaps, a wiser man, but just as he left the Stranger said:

'Do, please, give me the name and address of your philosophy professor. I should like to write to him and tell him exactly what I think of him, for wasting the money and spoiling the careers of young men by advising them to take the most useless course of study possible for poor lads who have to make a living for themselves.'

XIV

A Village Lad Saves His Country

THERE WAS a school in one of the villages, which the Stranger used to visit, and he very often went there and talked to the boys and girls about vaccination and ventilation and chimneys and good seed and silkworms and poultry and wool-spinning and knitting, and all the many other things he thought villagers ought to know about and practise.

The children were interested and gladly learnt the new things but the Stranger could not get them to practise them themselves or to persuade their parents to try them.

‘How can we children change things?’ they always said. ‘It is the grown-ups who do everything. What can we young ones do?’

‘You can do nothing till you try and if you really do try,’ said the Stranger, ‘you can do a lot. Now let me tell you a story—you all like stories—of what a village lad once did. He was the youngest of eight sons and being the baby of the family, he was generally sent to look after his father’s sheep. He was a fine strapping lad, with plump red cheeks from the fresh air of the mountain-side where he grazed his sheep, and he had strong straight limbs from drinking the milk and lassi of his flocks. What shall we call our hero? What’s your name, my lad?’ the Stranger asked, pointing to a bright well-grown lad.

‘David, sir.’

‘Very well, let our hero be called David. Well, young David did not idle all day when he was looking after sheep, as you boys often do. He practised playing the harp, and he also made a hobby of his sling, until from

fifty yards away he could hit a mark as big as a football every shot. He was also a very plucky lad and if wild animals came after his sheep he went straight for them and killed them with stones from his sling.



DAVID, THE SHEPHERD BOY

defied the whole army! "Send out your man!" he used to shout—"and let us fight. If I win you shall be our slaves, if your champion kills me, then we will be your slaves!" Every one, from the King downwards, was terrified. The King offered huge rewards for any one who would fight the giant, but every one was far too frightened to volunteer.

'David was very shocked when he heard all this. He was convinced that God was on the side of his country, so he didn't at all like the idea of this great brute defying the armies of God. He wasn't a bit frightened. All alone

'Then war broke out and three of David's brothers joined the army and went to the front. One day David's father sent him to see how his soldier brothers were getting on. When he reached the front he found things were going very badly. Every day for more than a month a huge and fierce giant had come out in front of the enemy's lines and

in the jungle he had knocked out fierce wild beasts when they tried to attack his sheep. He didn't think this great brute would be any more dangerous than they were. So next morning he went out of camp to have a look at the giant. There he stood, jeering at his enemies. He wore a brass helmet, a coat of mail, and brass leg-guards; a man walked in front of him carrying his shield. The giant had a sword, an enormous spear and a javelin. David began to think, "I don't suppose," he thought, "that either the giant or his shield-bearer have ever had stones slung at them. I have only to stun the great brute with a stone, his shield-bearer will run away, and then, before he can recover I will run in and chop off his head with his own sword!" So he told the soldiers that he was ready to fight the giant, and they told the King. The King was delighted and offered David his own armour. David tried it on, but he saw at once that this strange armour would only be in his way. So he just picked five smooth round stones from the bed of the stream, slipped them into his shepherd's bag and away he went to tackle the giant. The giant was furious when he saw a mere shepherd boy challenging him with a lathi and a sling. He cursed David and said, "Come on, and I'll give your flesh to the kites and jackals". David shouted back: "I will cut your head off and this very day the kites and jackals will eat the bodies of you and your soldiers. God is going to help me; now we'll see who can fight best." The giant came raging on and David ran to meet him. The moment he was near enough, crack went his sling, and before the giant knew what was happening, he was hit right on the forehead and crash! down he fell in a heap, unconscious. Away fled the armour bearer; up rushed David, put

one foot on the giant, wrenched his great sword out and hacked off his head.'

'But that's the story of David and Goliath,'¹ said the teacher and several boys all at once.

'Of course it is,' said the Stranger. 'And next time you boys think you can't do anything to help your village, just get your Bibles out and read how a village lad saved his country.'

'But God was on David's side,' said the teacher.

'And so He is on our side when we are fighting dirt, disease, malnutrition, waste, apathy, laziness, dishonesty, bad customs and all the other giants who defy our efforts to lead a full Christian life.'

XV

*If any will not Work neither let him Eat*²

'My son is coming home today,' said a man proudly to the Stranger as he passed his house in the village.

'I am so glad; where has he been?' And after looking at the man's other children, obviously quite uneducated, he said: 'Where is he doing his mazduri?'

'Mazduri indeed! He is a B.A. and working in a big office as a senior clerk.'

'Then why have his brothers not also been educated?'

'We had not enough money to make them all B.A.s, so we made John a B.A. and he keeps us all.'

'But do not the others do any work? At least they could do mazduri or learn some handicraft?'

'Of course, not. How can a B.A. and senior clerk's brothers do mazduri?'

¹ 1 Sam. xvii.

² 2 Thess. iii. 10.



WE LIVE ON OUR BROTHER

'How utterly wicked, to live in idleness and feed on your brother,' said the Stranger turning to the man's other sons.

'Why is it wicked?' they asked in surprise.

'In the first place, how can your brother save money to marry and bring up a family when you are eating up all his savings?'

'He is already married, and so are we.'

'Married before you have started to earn a living? This is still worse.'

'My brother's earnings will pay for our children's food.'

'And how will his children be educated?'

'Somehow or other we shall educate one so that he may feed his brothers.'

'What does somehow or other mean?' asked the Stranger. But there was no answer.

'I will tell you what somehow or other means. John will have to take bribes and be dishonest. There is no other way to bring up and educate his own children, as well as feed you lazy ones.'

'Why should that be so?'

'His pay is calculated so that he may just be able to bring up his own children if he is thrifty and saves money before they are born and before their education begins to cost money. This is impossible while you sit idle at home.'

'But how can a B.A.'s brother do mazduri?'

'Of course he can. All work is honourable. It is only idleness that is dishonourable. It is not only dishonourable, it is wicked.'

'But why is it wicked?'

'It is against the law of God. Did not God say to Adam, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat

bread" ? God meant all of us to work. St Paul says : "If any will not work, neither let him eat." Idleness is, perhaps, the greatest of all sins.'

'But why is idleness so bad ?'

'Because it leads to all the other sins. Idle people quarrel. Idle people are dirty. Idle people have no self-respect. Idle people take no interest in their homes or children. Idle people have idle thoughts. Idle thoughts are the father of idle words, and idle deeds. Jesus Christ said that for every idle word we speak we shall have to give an account.¹ Had we not, therefore, do everything we possibly can to avoid being idle ? Busy people, besides not quarrelling, are far more happy and contented than idle people. People whose minds and hands are occupied very rarely grumble. Idle people neglect God. Their church is neglected and dirty. Busy people keep their church clean and tidy, because they are clean themselves. Having kept their church tidy they are proud of it and go to worship there. Busy people take an interest in their work, and they do not waste money in idle extravagances. They are thrifty and bring their money home so that their wives or mothers may make their homes nice, and bring up their children well. And the nicer their homes become, the harder they work so that they may keep them nice and go on making them better and better, fit even for Jesus Christ to visit.'

¹ Matt. xii. 36.

*Suffer the little Children to come unto Me, and
forbid them not, for of such is the
Kingdom of God¹*

THERE was one village that the Stranger visited quite often, but he made little or no progress with the people. They seemed too obstinate, or else too lazy or too careless and listless, to take any notice of the things he told them. This was particularly the case with the women, which was especially discouraging to the Stranger, as he knew from former experiences in many villages that it is really the women who count most in improving home and village life.

'After all,' he thought to himself, 'it is the women who cook the food—either wasting it or making good use of it according to their skill or ignorance. It is the women who make the clothes—if any are made—and train the children—if they get any training at all. If, during all my visits,' thought the Stranger, 'I have not been able to persuade the women to do those things which will bring health and happiness to their children, then I am wasting my time visiting the village at all.'

So the Stranger arranged for his wife to come to the village, and hold what she called a baby show, the purpose of which was to try to bring to the mothers some of the knowledge, ideas and training which would help to give a more abundant life to those of whom Jesus said: 'Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of God.' 'The mothers love their children,' the Stranger said, 'and if they can be shown by another mother how she herself was able to express her own love in the proper

¹ Matt. xix. 14; Mark x. 14; Luke xviii. 16.

care of her own children, then, perhaps, the village mothers will listen to her, and begin to put into practice some of the things which they have already been told, but seem not to appreciate. In such a way by actual demonstration,' he thought, 'we can teach these village mothers to show their love by trying to provide their children with health and happiness, instead of showing it by loading them with cheap ornaments.'



WHAT A NOISE AND CONFUSION THE OLD WOMEN MADE WITH
THEIR SHRILL VOICES

So plans were made by the Stranger's wife, with the help of a lady doctor and a Health Visitor, to hold a baby show. On the appointed day the Health Visitor collected all the mothers and little children; all creeds, castes and communities came, and it was a large gathering. But the old women came also, and oh, what a noise they

made and what confusion they created by warning the mothers in their shrill voices, that if any child should be given a health prize, or be praised openly, the result would be that the evil spirits or the evil eye would become jealous, and something terrible would happen to the children, if not indeed to all of them. But all this fuss and bother was soon quieted down by the Health Visitor, who was an experienced village worker and so knew how to deal with this sort of thing.

And then the work started, amid the shouting and laughing of many excited children and mothers. Each child was brought in turn to the ladies and quickly and skilfully examined. The purpose was two-fold—to find the best-kept children, and to find out any disease or defect which should have attention. The best-kept children were to receive prizes, and all the children were to receive toys. The sight of the toys doubled the excitement and the noise.

When anything was found wrong with one of the children the ladies pointed this out to the mother or to the big sister who brought the child.

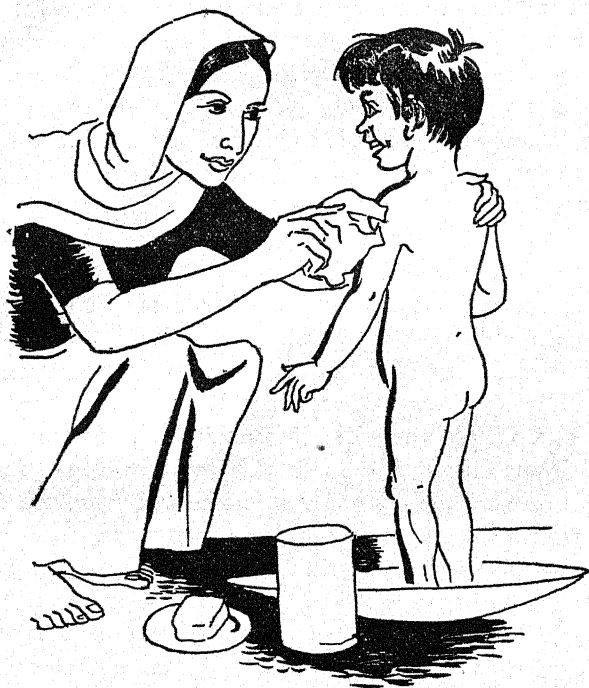
‘Look at this child,’ said the Stranger’s wife. ‘It has just had smallpox. Why was it not vaccinated?’

‘I did not know about vaccination,’ said the mother.

‘Then you do know now,’ answered the lady doctor. ‘You are lucky that the child is still alive and that his face is not worse scarred than it is. Be sure and vaccinate all of your other children and tell all your neighbours to do the same. One vaccination soon after birth, and then one after every five or six years will save you and your neighbours a lot of trouble and worry, and save your children from becoming blind or even dying of smallpox.’

‘This child is dirty,’ said the Health Visitor, but the

general confusion was so great that the mother could not hear what she was saying. So she shouted, 'dirty, DIRTY, DIRTY' louder and louder each time. Just then there came a sudden lull in the noise, so that every one heard a loud cry of DIRTY! and stopped talking in order to hear what the shout was for. Taking advantage of the sudden silence the Health Visitor continued :



CHILDREN MUST BE WASHED DAILY IN WARM WATER`

'Children must be washed daily in warm water. All children like to play with mud and water, and they would not be natural if they did not like to do so. So they should be allowed to have this pleasure. But

afterwards they should be washed and dressed in clean clothes, in place of the old ones they have been given for playing in the mud and water. Their clothes must be washed with warm water and soap. Children must be taught such habits, while they are still young, as it will bring good health and cleanliness. If children are allowed to go dirty, and to wear dirty clothes, they will get insects in their heads and on their bodies, which will eat away their brightness and health, and possibly bring some serious disease. Remember, too, that unless children are taught good habits when they are young, they will grow up to feel inferior and to lack self-respect. They must not be allowed to bite their nails, scratch themselves, or pick their noses. These habits will also hinder them as they grow up, hurt their health and make other people dislike them.'

As soon as the Health Visitor had finished, the Stranger's wife started: 'Listen, mothers! Child-love does not mean spoiling our children by letting them do what they like, eat when they like, ease themselves when and where they like just like little animals, and be as dirty and untidy as they like. Child-love means training your child, keeping it clean and teaching it to clean itself, feeding it at regular times and on the right kind of foods, and seeing that it sleeps at regular times. It is only in this way that a child will grow up to have self-control and self-respect. Child-love does not mean smacking the child one minute and the next minute loading it with cheap jewellery and celluloid bangles, which may catch fire and perhaps kill the child. Nor does it mean boring the ears of the child with many holes so that it may wear trinkets in its ears. They will weigh down and spoil the ears, and prevent the child either washing properly or playing freely. Besides,

there is great pain when the ears are bored, the ears often swell and become infected, and cause many weeks of suffering.'

But the mothers had heard all that they could take in for the moment, and they and the children drowned the voice of the Stranger's wife with their shouts and questions. So the examination of the children was continued.

'This child has itch (*kujli*),' said the lady doctor to one of the mothers.

'How can I help it?' protested the mother.

'Wash it thoroughly and regularly—skin diseases come from dirt,' replied the lady doctor.

Then the Stranger's wife turned to another mother and said: 'Your child's eyes are bad.' 'I fear that his sight may already be damaged, and may even be entirely lost later on, unless care is taken now. This child must be looked at by the lady doctor, who will give you medicine for its eyes. Listen all you mothers,' she shouted at the top of her voice, 'all children's eyes must be washed regularly and carefully or they may lose their sight.'

'Are you not able to knit or sew?' asked the Health Visitor of one mother who had a rag-covered baby in her arms.

'No,' replied the mother, 'I was never taught.'

'Then we will begin to teach you now. Come to our daily class. Many mothers have learned in a very short time to make very attractive clothes from the cheapest khaddar and to knit warm clothes from the wool of their own sheep. You are intelligent, even though you may be poor, so if you come regularly you will soon be able to do very nice work.'

One woman came with twin children, the one a bonny

and healthy child, while the other was scrawny and half-starved.

'What is this?' asked the Health Visitor.

'I haven't enough milk for both the babies,' said the mother, 'So I am giving one all it needs and the other has to take what is left. This is better than that both of them should die.'

'Have you never heard of bottle feeding?' asked the Health Visitor.

'No,' replied the mother, 'besides, such a young child would die if given anything but mother's milk. All the old women can tell you that. When you give small babies buffalo's milk they soon get sick and die.'

'They will not die,' replied the Stranger's wife, 'if you are careful to keep the bottles clean, take care of the milk properly, and mix it with the right amount of clean warm water. I often feed my own children in this way. Come to our class and we will teach you at once.'

And so the day wore on amid great noise and happiness, until it was time to distribute the prizes and toys.

'Hullo,' said the Stranger's wife to a small girl with a chubby child on her hip. 'I've seen that baby before; I never forget a chubby baby.'

'Oh, no,' said the sister, 'you couldn't have seen it before, as I've only just brought it in this minute.'

'Let me see the child,' said the Stranger's wife and picked up the child in her arms. A toy dropped from the child's hands, another from its clothes, and then a third, until finally the seventh toy had dropped to the ground. Everyone shouted with laughter.

The sister's eyes began to grow big and her mouth to curl down at the corners when the Stranger's wife said kindly, 'Don't cry, don't cry, I am not angry. But really I must have some of those toys back. You can-

not have all seven or there will not be enough to go round for the others. But how did the child manage to get so many? I suppose your mother brought your little brother first, and he received one toy, then next your aunt brought him for a second, then your big sister got him a third, and so on, until now you have brought him for the seventh. But do not cry, he can keep three of the toys, one because he is clean, one because his clothes are clean, even though they are made of the cheapest homespun, and the third because he has a vaccination mark.'

The judging was now over and the Stranger's wife held up the winning child in her arms and said, 'This is the child that wins first prize. He is not a rich woman's child, but a poor woman's child. But this mother knows how to keep it clean, feed it properly, and to clothe it in simple but good clothes, which she has made for it herself. And we hope that the mother will also learn to train her son in the ways of truth and honesty, so that he will grow up to be a good citizen with self-control and self-respect. I am saying this purposely. Without truth and honesty between man and man, we cannot build up a Christian community. Unless we speak truth every man to his neighbour,¹ we will not be able to trust each other, nor can we join together in business, in worship, or even in games. Just now we all saw a small child tell a lie to get a toy for her little brother. I did not scold her, because she was the sixth person who had done the same for the child, and all of the others are older than she is. If these six lies had been successful they would have deprived several other children of their toys. We tell lies to benefit ourselves at the expense of others.

¹ Eph. iv. 25.

'In fact, truth is one of the most valuable things in life. Until we speak the truth to each other we can have no progress, and no co-operation, and worst of all, we are sinning against God when we tell lies and deceive each other. Ananias and Sapphira tried to deceive God by telling lies and you all know what happened to them.'¹

And so the day went on with more talks, some games and more laughter, until the time came for the returning of the buffaloes. Then the mothers set off home with their happy children—and their toys—to prepare the evening meal, and the ladies set off home, all talking over on the way the many new and interesting things which they had seen and heard during the afternoon.

XVII

Gather up the broken Pieces which Remain over, that Nothing be Lost²

'If there is no place in Christianity for laziness and ignorance,' said the Stranger one day to a group of leaders outside the Church, 'still less is there room for waste.'

'Why do you speak of waste? We are so poor that we have nothing to spare that could possibly be wasted.'

'It is often those who have the least, who waste the most,' replied the Stranger. '"Eat, drink and be merry"³ is sometimes the motto for those who do not know what the future holds for them.'

'Why should you charge us with eating, drinking and being merry when we are far too poor to waste money

¹ Acts v. 1-11.

² John vi. 12.

³ Luke xii. 19.

on this kind of life? You should go to the rich land-owners with this message, instead of coming to us poor landless peasants who do not even have enough money for the things we need. Where do we ever waste any money, and besides, how can we waste money that we have not got?’

‘Let us take weddings, to begin with,’ replied the Stranger in a kindly tone. ‘They tell me that there was a wedding in this village a few days ago, which cost over Rs 200, and the family was not rich, but really quite poor. Preparation and expenditure for a wedding should be made as one would do for a long journey. The money should not be squandered in a few short hours on things that have no lasting value. Suppose that these Rs 200 instead of being mostly wasted, had been spent on farm equipment and animals, or on the equipment for some trade or industry, and on other things which would have fitted out the young couple for home-making; would that not have been much more worth while?’

‘That way of spending the money would certainly have been much wiser, but what would the people have said if the family had used the money that way?’

‘We are not discussing what people say or do not say. We are talking about waste, and you cannot but admit that most of the expenditure for your marriage celebrations represents a waste of money, instead of a constructive investment in things of lasting value. And as for what people say, a wise man once advised us thus: “People say. What do they say? Let them say!” You remember that Jesus warned His disciples that they would be spoken evil of and reviled for obeying Him?’¹

¹ Matt. v. 11-12.

'All of this is true,' replied one of the younger elders, 'but you must remember that we are slaves to custom.'

'Then let us take another example where social customs are not involved, yet the waste is equally great; the matter of debts and borrowing money.'

'But you must not condemn us for borrowing money as we cannot get along without cash,' said one of the older men.

'That may be true enough, but what I want to ask is—what do you do with the cash once you have borrowed it? Do you use this money to buy improved seed, or better farm equipment, or for some trade or industry?'

'I fear that we often spend the money, sir, on things that do not help us to make our living,' said one of the younger men.

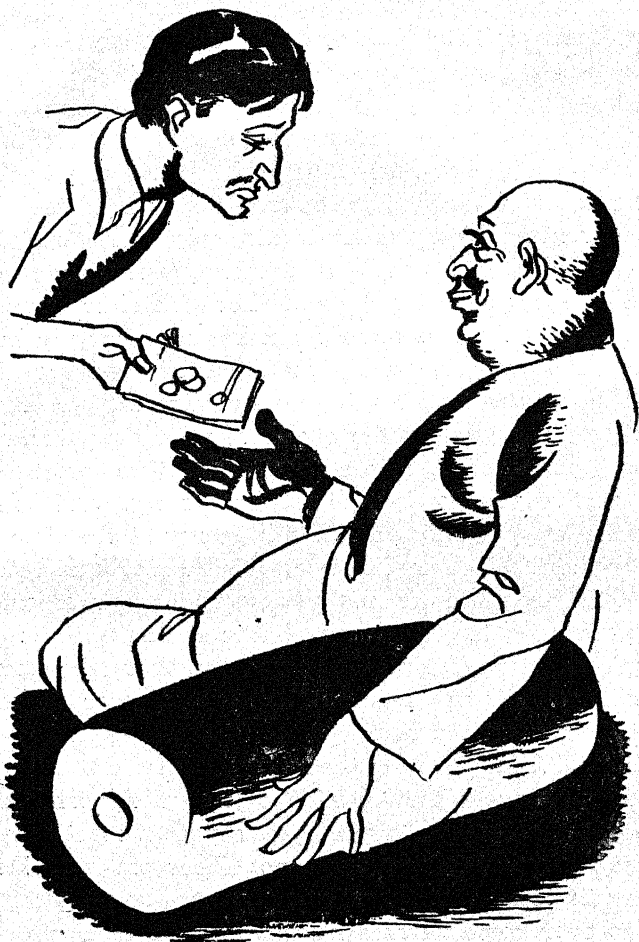
'In other words, you not only waste your own money, but you also waste money that you have borrowed from some one else. And as for borrowing, if you must borrow, why do you not always borrow from the co-operative bank, which charges about one-third the interest rates of the money-lenders, and never charges compound interest?'

'But many of us cannot borrow from the co-operative bank, because they say that we are not trustworthy enough, so we have to go to the money-lenders to get any money at all.'

'And this,' replied the Stranger, 'is simply another example of waste. You waste your good name, as well as other things. Honest men, who never break their word, who work hard and are never idle, or extravagant, and always prove themselves worthy of trust, can borrow money cheaper than those who are less reliable.'

Our character is part of our credit ; therefore, we should never waste our reputation by being unreliable.'

'But are we really unreliable ?' asked one of the elders.



PAYING FOR THE DOWRY

‘Not all, but some are. There is a quarrel at the present time in this village, because a father took dowry money for his daughter from suitors in two different villages. Has he not proved himself unreliable? And, besides, is it not quite wrong to require another family to pay for a wife for their son? It is even worse if the family has to borrow the money, especially if the money is only going to be wasted. In any case, it is your own daughter, who really suffers in the end, since all of the money that her husband can earn goes to pay the exorbitant interest that the money-lender squeezes out of him for the dowry money which was borrowed. So your daughter has to live in greater poverty than she need have, if you had not started her off on her married life in debt. And sometimes, she has no money to buy soap, or to provide the right kind of food for the children, or medicine for the family in case of sickness. Thus you are wasting the health of your daughter and your grandchildren, as well as their future happiness, and all that you have in return is the memory of a few days eating, drinking and making merry at the time of the wedding. Do you not often think how much better it would have been if that money, which you extorted for your daughter, had been spent in setting up the new couple in some business or trade, so that they could afford to bring up their children properly, or at least that it should have been spent in furnishing their new home and fitting them out for home life?’

‘Then there is the question of litigation,’ continued the Stranger. ‘Can any of you say that most of the money spent on litigation is not sheer waste? How many times do any of you gain any money by going to court over some petty quarrel? So far as I can see there is no benefit to any one except those outside the

village, such as the clerks, petition-writers, and pleaders to whom you pay good money to handle your case in the court.'



ONLY THE PLEADER GAINS FROM QUARRELS

'I am afraid,' said the elder, 'that I must admit that our litigation represents another form of pure waste.'

'And it is often-times even worse than simple waste. The Bible tells us to agree with our adversary quickly,¹ and calls the peacemaker blessed.² Instead, you often go to court in haste, and give false evidence and pay bribes. Can any one litigate without these helps? The Bible tells us "Speak ye truth each one with his neighbour".³ Also knowing our temptation, the Bible says: "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour."⁴ The Bible also in many places condemns the giving and taking of bribes.⁵ Yet instead of taking the

¹ Matt. v. 25; Luke xii. 58-9.

² Matt. v. 9.

³ Eph. iv. 25.

⁴ Exod. xx. 16; Matt. xix. 18.

⁵ 1 Sam. viii. 3; Deut. xvi. 19; Ps. xv. 15.

advice of the Bible, you often listen to friends who tell you that others give bribes and bring false witnesses, and so it is quite right for you to do the same.'

'Unfortunately, such is often the case,' said the elder.

'Let us come to the practical side of this question of litigation and consider some of the ways of eliminating this kind of waste. For instance, all should be careful to guard their tongues. Back-biting, tale-bearing and abuse all lead to quarrelling and often to litigation. It is very wasteful to live at variance with our neighbours, as it prevents us from working together and makes us work against each other. By having a co-operative society we can work together for our common good and provide money for many of the needs of the village. But where there is enmity and quarrelling there cannot be a co-operative society. But on the other hand many quarrels arise out of money matters, so a co-operative society will help to prevent quarrels. Yet another way to prevent quarrelling is to have a panchayat to settle differences before they get into court. Or, perhaps, the church committee can also do this. But none of them can help us unless we ourselves are determined to live at peace with our neighbours, as the Bible tells us to do.'¹

'It is quite true that everything which keeps us apart is wasteful, even though we do not always realize it. That is why the Bible is very insistent that we should not quarrel. Disagreements are sure to occur, but we must patch them up before they lead to quarrels. Jesus Christ Himself tells us to agree with our adversary quickly.² St Paul says, "as much as in you lieth, be at peace with all men". Quarrelling and litigation are both wicked, as well as wasteful. The real foundation

¹ Rom. xii. 18 ; 2 Cor. xiii. 11. ² Matt. v. 25.

of peace in the family and in the village is self-control and self-respect. Self-control makes us keep our tempers, watch our tongues and bear with patience the little things our neighbours do, which we do not like. Self-respect forbids us to tell lies, give false evidence and to give or take bribes. Without them litigation is not worthwhile !'

'Then I am afraid we do not all of us practice self-control and self-respect.'

'They are difficult to practise—for all of us. But they become easier if they are taught us in childhood by our mothers—my mother used to scrub my tongue with a brush and soap if I told a lie or said a dirty word—but only those mothers can do it who have themselves been trained.'

'Then we must see to it that our daughters go to school and are trained in these things, and our wives go to Health Centres and hospitals and classes where they can get advice about bringing up children.'

'That is absolutely correct, and that brings me to yet another form of waste that we seldom think of; the waste of the things for which our tax-money pays. None of us enjoy paying taxes or paying the irrigation rates, but this is no reason to waste the things this tax-money provides for our benefit.'

'You mean we must make full use of the Government schools and technical training centres for our children, and take our sick people to the Government hospitals?'

'Yes, all of these and many more. There is all the help provided by the staff of the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Industries. They also issue printed bulletins on all kinds of subjects, and they arrange demonstrations and exhibitions in agriculture and industry. In addition there is the help offered by the

Department of Rural Reconstruction and the Co-operative Department.'

'But our people have not the training and the inclination to use these things,' replied the elder 'In fact even we leaders often fall short in this matter.'

'That is really the root of the matter; you leaders. What would have happened to the Israelites if Moses had merely said that they were ignorant and undisciplined, and had no training or inclination for better things! He did not do that. No, he left the luxury of the princes of Egypt and spent his life in the uplift of his people. It is only when leaders know what should be done and set the example of doing it themselves and sacrifice themselves to help and to teach others to do so too that a community can rise from poverty and ignorance.'

XVIII

*Whatsoever thy hand Findeth to do, Do it with thy Might*¹

'You are asking too much of us, sir,' said the mannad to the Stranger, when they met in the fields near a Christian canal colony village.

The Stranger looked around for a moment at the crops growing in the fields, and then said, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might". This instruction from our Master is my excuse for urging you and your village friends to greater and more effective effort. I can see plenty of weeds, but I cannot see much signs of "might" having been applied to these cotton fields.'

'What is wrong with our cotton?' replied the mannad in a peevish tone, 'is it not good American cotton?'

¹ Eccles. ix. 10.

'Yes, the seed you planted seems to have been American cotton, but look at these weeds that have been allowed to grow! And see, it is not planted in lines!'



'THIS COTTON IS HALF DESI!'

Line sowing, followed by weeding and proper cultivating is worth two maunds extra in the yield per acre. Look at the *akh* bushes growing in so many places !'

'You are right,' answered the mannad, 'the cotton has not been planted in lines, and there are certainly more weeds than there should be. Also, I admit that it has not been cultivated enough. But you see we are very poor, and . . .'

'And ?' interrupted the Stranger, 'let me finish your sentence. And this American cotton has a lot of *desi* cotton plants growing among the American. When American and *desi* cotton are mixed, the buyers will not pay you such a good price, in fact some merchants may use this as an excuse for not paying you even a fair price. When you take your cotton to him he will say "Why, this cotton is half *desi*", when really it is not nearly half *desi*. By allowing these *desi* cotton plants to grow up with your American cotton instead of pulling them out as weeds you have spoiled your chances of producing top grade cotton.'

'That is true, oh most worthy Stranger, but I repeat what I said before ; you must remember that we are very poor.'

'You have spoken well, when you say that you are poor, but your poverty is not only in money but in knowledge. Do you not know that you could have bought improved seed for practically the same price that you paid for this mixed seed if you had only taken the trouble ?'

'Well, this is only one crop,' answered the mannad by way of excusing himself.

'It is true that it is only one crop, but it ought to have been your most valuable crop, if you had tended it with all your might as a Christian should have done.'

'But how do you expect us Christians to be good farmers when we do not own the land that we work? Do you not know that we are handicapped by the laws of the land?'

'I already know,' answered the Stranger, 'that what you say is unfortunately true, but that is not an excuse for farming what little land you have got in an inefficient manner. Does it not remind you of the story of the talents? No man who fails to make the best possible use of even the one talent which his Master gives him can possibly make any objection when the same Master that gave it takes it away again and gives it to another steward who has already proved himself faithful by doing with his might what he had found to do.'¹

'I am afraid that what you say is quite true.'

'Now that we are on the subject of land,' went on the Stranger, 'let us take up thoroughly this matter of the ownership of land of which you have already justly complained. If you were a land-owner and were looking for a tenant for that land, would you search for a really good farmer who happened to be a Christian, or would you choose a good Christian without considering whether he was a good or a bad farmer?'

'According to you, sir,' replied the mannaad, 'a good Christian ought for that very reason to be a good farmer, if he lives up to the teaching of the Master about working with all his might.'

'But let us not be content with what ought to be. Are you Christians really good farmers?'

'In many cases I fear that we are not,' replied the mannaad.

'Then do you not think that this may, perhaps, be

¹ Matt. xxv. 28-9.

one of the chief reasons that Christians are not able to get land to cultivate? Landowners naturally want good rents and look around for the best possible farmers for tenants so that they may get good rents. You have several Christian villages in the Punjab such as Martinpur, Youngsonabad, Bethlehem and Montgomerywala. Are all of these villages noted for the excellence of their farming standards?’

‘Certainly not,’ admitted the mannad, ‘Mr Heinrich worked hard for many years in Martinpur to improve the farming, but only a few of the people followed his advice. Even those who did profit by his work were not willing to follow him in everything.’

‘And fewer still, I am sorry to say, used improved seed and better farming methods on their own accord. Even manure pits were not common. Every cultivator must collect every bit of manure, rubbish and sweepings and waste vegetable matter in a six-foot deep pit. The manure pit is the farmer’s treasure house. A pamphlet about pits can be had from the Registrar of Co-operative Societies, Queen’s Road, Lahore.’

‘We are not good farmers, I am afraid.’

‘Then,’ replied the Stranger, ‘is this not a reason why your leaders and teachers should learn the practice of good farming, and teach their people? They must obtain and issue to the people the best improved seed. And they must not be content with teaching this for one week or one month, or even one year, but they must be willing to go on and on until all the Christians are good farmers and their reputation for farming is so high that the landowners will search for Christians as tenants, just as they now seek out the Arains for growing vegetables.’

'If this could be done,' replied the mannad, 'it would certainly bring many Christians a better living.'



THE FARMER'S TREASURE HOUSE

'There is another matter of which we Christians often talk in very vague terms as having possibilities, and that is the matter of improved poultry. If the Christians

would take up the keeping of pedigree poultry, then people would come to them for eggs for setting, cockerels for breeding, and for eggs and poultry to eat. Poultry do not need much land.'

'I am afraid that we have not taken up poultry seriously either,' replied the mannad.

'Do not take offence,' replied the Stranger, 'and I will tell you why none of you ever do anything about this good idea. Frankly, most of us are better at talking than we are acting upon a good idea. Here is something which our hand has found to do, but we have not only not done it with all our might, but we have not done it at all. Can we expect the great Master to say, "Well done good and faithful servant"?'¹

'At the beginning of our conversation,' said the mannad, 'I blamed you for asking too much of us, but now I see that our Master asks even more.'

'Then again,' continued the Stranger, 'there is the example of fruit culture. In those villages owned by Christians could they not plant orchards, cultivate and spray them scientifically, and then grade and pack the fruit in the best manner, and market it co-operatively so as to get the best price for it? If Christians were expert at the best methods of fruit culture, some of them could earn a good living by working as tenants or as orchard-men in orchards, which are becoming common in many places. The same professional skills could be learned for bee-keeping, silk-rearing and vegetable-growing, so that those of you who have no farms of their own could get steady and well-paid work.'

'Your standards are very high, sir,' replied the mannad.

'What else dare I do?' replied the Stranger. 'We are living in a very hard and competitive world, where

¹ Matt. xxv. 21-3.

every one must use his intelligence and brains as well as his muscles, and all must be organized. In the old order every one could more or less expect to get enough of the simplest kind of food which would keep him from starving, but in the new order he is guaranteed nothing. In this the Christian community is no exception. But we Christians should not be sorry for this change as it gives us a chance to overcome all our handicaps and difficulties and to develop the kind of character which our Master wishes to see in us. Although we may continue to have handicaps, we have two great advantages; our high ideals and our organization. The Bible speaks much more strongly than I do; it says, "If any will not work, neither let him eat".¹

The mannad then looked at the Stranger with a serious expression and said: 'Sir, even though your statements are very stern, I cannot but agree that they are true, and that we Christians must take the words of such persons as yourself more seriously than we have done in the past. Formerly, when a stranger like yourself came to our village and tried to teach us, we were convinced up to a point and some of us were almost persuaded to act on some of the suggestions. But when the stranger had gone, the old men of the village made light of the new ideas, and convinced us that we need take no more trouble in the matter. Also, even the best of us were always able to excuse ourselves from action, on the ground that the carrying out of these suggestions would require a certain amount of money. Let us take for instance cottage industries ...'

'Stop, most worthy mannad, as I know what you are going to say, since I have heard the same thing so often

¹ 2 Thess. iii. 10.

before. Cottage industries, while they do not take land as a rule, do take a certain amount of capital and you have already said that you and your fellow villagers are



WHEN THE STRANGER HAS GONE THE OLD MEN MAKE FUN

very poor. But to begin one of these cottage industries in a small way would not require as much money as some of you spend on a single wedding! By organizing a co-operative society you could obtain both the capital you need and the equipment, and the raw materials, as well as the teaching which will give you the necessary skill and knowledge to follow this—or any other—trade.'

'But such a project would only help a few,' replied the mannad, 'and we are half a million Christians in the Punjab alone, most of us being very poor.'

'Quite so,' replied the Stranger, 'but before we give up let us take all the facts into account. According to the demands of our Master, one who is helped must in turn become a helper of others. If we look at the problem and dismiss our responsibility with the excuse that the problem is so vast that nothing can be done, then nothing will be done. But if we nibble off a corner here and a corner there, it will soon make an impression. Mountains cannot be moved all at once, but a mountain broken up into shovel loads can ultimately be cast into the sea, even though we have to carry it in baskets on our heads. No doubt this was what the Master meant when He told His disciples that if they had enough faith they could move a mountain.'¹

'I cannot but agree with you,' replied the mannad, 'but if I go to the village gathering at the brotherhood house in the village this evening and tell them what you have said, the old men and the wise-heads will say, "A cottage industry such as silk raising will not even pay for the labour".'

'This was only an example,' replied the Stranger. 'If the wise-heads object to silk culture, then give them this example. I was once in Raiwind and I saw a missionary making rafters and roofing out of reinforced concrete. The beams he made were very cheap, cheaper than wood, they were also straighter, and the white ants could not eat them. This type of roof did not leak during the rain, nor was it washed away like mud roofs. Would not the village landowners like to have these straight rafters which the white ants cannot eat, and

¹ Matt. xvii. 20 ; xxi. 21 ; Mark xi. 23.

these rain-proof roofs, if they could get them for practically the same cost as they now spend on the usual type of village roof? Having once learned to work in concrete, you and your co-operative society could make drain pipes, water troughs and bins, and many other new and useful things for home and farm.'

'This may be true,' interrupted the mannad, 'but cement for concrete work is expensive.'

'Well, if you want something for which all the materials may be found in or near the village let us take the matter of chimneys. Every *chula* should have a chimney to take the smoke away. Smoke is very bad for the eyes and chimneys are getting very popular, but few people know how to make them properly. If several of you were to learn how to make them correctly and were to go round building them in village houses, could they not make some money, as well as doing a great service to the women? If you could also invent a *chula* made of simple village materials which would use less fuel and give more heat than the present kind, which uses so much fuel for so little heat, your team of workers would never want for profitable work. Then there is the making of ventilators, drains, pit latrines, septic tanks, and other improvements for villages and towns.'

'This sort of work requires knowledge and capital,' replied the mannad.

'Yes, and it would also require a high standard of workmanship and honesty, and a co-operative society to organize it. But in a short time there would be a great demand, so that those who are now seeking work would be sought by others to do work for them, since there are very few people who know how to do this kind of work properly.'

'Nothing that you have mentioned is very easy,' said the mannad, when the Stranger had finished.

'I wish that there were an easy way to bring happiness and prosperity to your community, but I know very well that there is no easy way. There was once a king who wanted to learn to read, but he wanted an easy way. As there was no easy way, a proverb was made, which says, "There is no royal road to knowledge". If there were an easy road to happiness and prosperity there would be no need for us to discuss the matter. But Christianity itself is not an easy matter. We are told that in the Bible verse which says: "Narrow is the gate, and straitened the way, that leadeth unto life".¹ But Christianity will not be made more difficult, in fact it will be easier if we, like Jesus, combine careful attention to bodily needs with spiritual teaching. In the ninth chapter of Matthew we read: "And Jesus went about all the cities and the villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of disease and all manner of sickness."² Jesus expects His disciples to do the same, since He gave the following orders to His first missionaries: "And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out devils: freely ye received, freely give."³

XIX

Cleanliness is next to Godliness

'THE last time we met, you said that dirt was a sin,' said the elder to the Stranger. 'We have since been discussing this in our village brotherhood, but not many

¹ Matt. vii. 14.

² Matt. ix. 35.

³ Matt. x. 7-8.

agree with you. Can you give us any proof that what you say is true ?'

'Yes, I think that I can do so,' replied the Stranger. 'Dirt and laziness are as nearly related as brothers, and what sinful brothers they are ! Laziness leads to idle talk, and idle talk to vice and quarrelling. As the proverb says : "Satan finds mischief for idle hands to do." Laziness also leads to dirt, and dirt leads to disease. It is the lazy people that have insects on their heads and bodies. But even when dirt does not bring some actual disease, it reduces our vitality and prevents us from doing our best, whether in work, or in play, or in worship.'

'Then a dirty child is a sinful child,' queried the elder.

'Certainly not ! But its mother is sinful, or its older sister, or its father. The poor little child is just the innocent sufferer. But if any grown-up person should go to church dirty or in dirty clothes, simply because they were too lazy to wash, then they would certainly be committing a sin.'

'But suppose that we do not have any soap with which to wash our clothes ? You must always remember that most of us Christians are very poor, and we have no money to buy soap, and besides, even if we had money, soap is very expensive.'

'Soapmaking is taught in many schools and many of your girls and boys have learnt to make it. Also any of you who would like to learn can get bulletins of instructions from the Government. Oil-bearing seeds grow very well in many parts. You could raise a crop as your share of the produce, and turn it into soap for yourself, as well as sell some of it to get some extra money. But even if this were not possible, could not

some of you work a bit extra and buy some soap? Or could you not smoke a few less hookahs each week, and spend that money on soap? Should ear-rings and cel-



WASHING FOR CHURCH

luloid bangles for the children come before soap? Soap should come first after food and the most necessary clothes, since without soap we cannot reach the standard of cleanliness which is next in importance to godliness. In any case, as we said, laziness and dirt are brothers, since much of our poverty is due to idleness and laziness.

When Satan wants workers to serve him, he usually seeks for the idle people, as they are the ones who have time to spare, or are already busy quarrelling and wasting money.'

'I agree that young men are sometimes lazy, and could, if they wished, wash themselves and their clothes before going to church. But what about busy mothers, who are not only poor, but have so many children who get so dirty all the time, that it would need more energy than they can spare and more soap than they can buy to make them and their clothes clean for church? Are these mothers not to be excused?'

'These busy mothers certainly have a difficult task, but a thrifty and methodical mother could find the time, as well as the soap and energy, if she did not waste money buying useless charms, bangles and ornaments, and if she did not waste her time in gossiping—and if her husband did his fair share of the work and by working hard and wasting nothing himself was able to bring home all he possibly could to help the family to live as good a life as possible. Have you ever seen any woman try this and fail?'

'I must confess,' replied the elder, 'that I cannot point to any case of failure when the mother was thrifty and methodical, and her husband hard-working and also thrifty. But to have these virtues, the woman must be trained as a girl.'

'I see that you are indeed worthy to be called an elder, as you have named the real remedy. Girls must be trained when they are young, so that when they become mothers they will be thrifty and methodical and know how to look after their children, and to take care of their other household duties and to make the best of whatever money or material they have. They

must learn how to keep their homes clean and tidy. Many of your women-folk do it already. They must



THESE GIRLS WILL BE GOOD MOTHERS

all do it. They must be able to make and mend clothes ; they must learn how to get the best value out of all money spent for food ; they must learn how to cook well,

so as not to spoil food in cooking it; and they must not only learn how to make soap, but they must practise what they know. Also they must learn how to keep accounts, and have some training in first-aid and home nursing, and know how to keep their children from getting diseases. They must themselves know how to read and must know something of child psychology, so as to be able to train the children properly. They must know how to make simple toys and teach the children how to play with them.'

'What a list, sir!' exclaimed the elder.

'It sounds impossible, but it is not. However, it cannot all be done in one generation. But once we have started, each new generation will learn all that its mothers knew, and there will be less to teach them at school. But to get started we must have a Co-operative Women's Institute in every village, so as to teach the mothers, as well as the children.'

'What a complicated business this is,' said the elder. 'And then you make it even more complicated by saying that all of this is based on religion and required by religion to be done!'

'How can I avoid making such demands? All of this is necessary if we are to lead the happy healthy life that Jesus has shown us how to live, both by His teaching and by His example. How busy He was teaching and preaching, as we saw in the verses that I have often quoted, and at the same time how much of His energy was given to healing people, thus undoing the harm that was caused by the ignorance of His day.'

'But how do you connect this with what you said before?'

'Well, all of this simple training which I want the girls to have is to enable them to keep their families

happy and healthy, and so to avoid the diseases that Jesus spent so much time in healing.'

'I think that I see what you mean. You mean that if a mother keeps her children's eyes clean there will be less eye disease which leads to blindness, and if she made some woollen clothes for their families there would be less deaths from pneumonia.'

'Exactly, and that is why I say that if Jesus were to come here today He would insist on having all of these things taught both to the children and to their mothers, and to the future mothers as well. Read Matthew xi, verses 4 and 5 and hear how Jesus described His own work: "Go your way and tell John the things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good tidings preached to them." In His own description of His own work Jesus mentions five things connected with health before He mentions the preaching of the Gospel.'

'Then there is apparently no room for idleness among the women in Christianity,' replied the elder.

'But the same applies to the men. The women cannot buy the cloth to make clothes, or the material for mosquito nets, or the right kind of food for the children, or all the other things that the women require for efficient house-keeping and home making, unless the men learn and practise every possible means of increasing the family income. Both the husband and the wife must do their part, as illustrated by a Punjabi proverb, which says: "One hand cannot clap." Happiness and health can only be achieved by hard work on the part of all of us, men as well as women, by thrift, saving and wise spending, and by the acquisition and use of all

knowledge that can possibly be got—all inspired by the example of Him who told us to pray: 'Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth,'¹ and who came to this world that we might have 'abundant life',² and who told us that 'all things are possible to him that believeth'³ and promised us that we should do even 'greater works';⁴ than he did?

¹ Matt. vi. 10.

³ Mark ix. 23.

² John x. 10.

⁴ John xiv. 12.

THE BHOOSA-BOX

THE burning of cow-dung as fuel is one of the reasons why the average crop yields of India are so low, compared with other countries where cow-dung is used only as manure and never as fuel. Other fuel is very scarce in many parts of India, but there is one easy way by which we can rescue vast quantities of cow-dung for its proper use as manure and that is the **bhoosa¹-box**. Just as a thermos flask will keep hot things hot and cold things cold so will bhoosa. When villagers buy ice in the town for a wedding they keep it from melting by burying it in bhoosa.

In the same way things can also be kept hot by burying them in bhoosa. In particular, milk, cotton seed, gawar² and other pulses can be kept simmering in this way. Those who want hot water in the early morning, can heat it overnight and leave the degchi buried in bhoosa till the morning, thereby saving the trouble of getting up so much earlier to light the fire and heat the water.

In countries which have no bhoosa, hay is used for this business of 'cooking without fire' and the box is there called the hay-box and has been known for centuries. Bhoosa is as good as, or better than, hay for this purpose.

The instructions for using a bhoosa-box are as follows:

1. A hole in the ground is the easiest bhoosa-box but the labour of lifting a heavy pot from below the ground is great. A clay barola³ or the old hara³ can be used, or a wooden box. Perhaps the best of all would be a built-up solid brick and clay container above ground level.

2. Before burying in bhoosa, the food, water, milk or whatever has to be cooked or kept hot must of course be brought to the boil on an ordinary fire.

3. It must then be carefully covered up with a cloth as well as a lid to keep out dust.

4. See that there are no hot cinders sticking to the bottom of the pot.

5. Bury the pot deep in the bhoosa; the more bhoosa all round, underneath and on top the better. Six inches must be the minimum. The bhoosa must not be loose but fairly tightly packed.

¹ Chopped straw.

² A pulse used as cattle food.

³ Containers of unbaked clay,

6. The less air in the pot the hotter will the pot remain. The pot must therefore be as nearly full as possible and the air space must not be needlessly increased by using a pot or saucer turned upside down as a lid.

7. Instead of having loose bhoosa on top of the pot, use a cushion loosely stuffed with bhoosa. A cushion of cotton may also be used and has the advantage of containing no dust.

8. If you continually open the bhoosa-box, heat will soon be lost. So, if you want to get milk or water from time to time from the pot, have two bhoosa-boxes, one for use during the day and one to keep shut-up all day.

9. The bigger the quantity kept hot in one pot the longer will it stay hot. Small pots do not keep so hot as big ones.

10. The usual shape of pots makes it necessary to pack a new bhoosa nest every time the pot is put in. For bhoosa-boxes pots with straight sides like jars would be far better.

The lid of the bhoosa-box whether of wood, brick or clay must fit closely.

The commonest mistakes are (a) the barola, or box, or hara is too small, and so the bhoosa cushion is less than the minimum of six inches above, below and all around the pot, (b) the pots are only half-filled, (c) inverted saucers or pots are used as lids, (d) the top part of the pot is left uncovered or not sufficiently covered with bhoosa, (e) the lid of the bhoosa-box is too big or too small and does not fit properly.

MILK

The use of a bhoosa-box for milk has been carefully tested at the Imperial Institute of Dairying at Bangalore and it has been proved to be far the best of all village methods of making ghee.

After keeping the morning milk all day in the bhoosa-box, the evening milk can be added to it in just the same way as is done when a cow-dung fire is used.

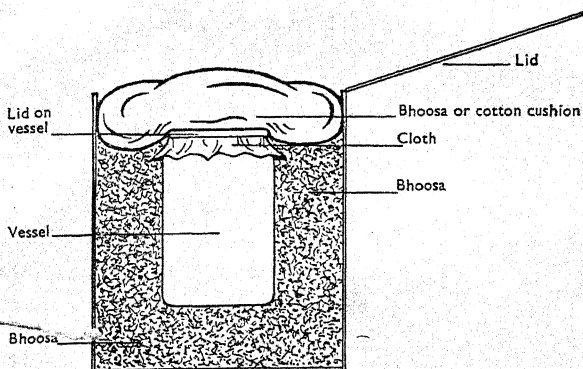
The advantages are as follows:

1. More ghee and cleaner ghee—for every seer of ghee made with a bhoosa-box you will get between one and two chattaks more ghee than with a cow-dung fire.

2. The food-values of the ghee, dahi (curds) and lassi (buttermilk) will be greater, as there will be no burning of the milk in the bhoosa-box.

3. The taste will be pure ghee, pure dahi and pure lassi. Unfortunately, this will, for the first few days, be a definite disadvantage; people accustomed to the aroma of smoke and cow-dung, will think pure lassi rather tasteless until they get used to it!

For some reason, at present unknown, milk very often goes bad in summer in a bhoosa-box. Do not therefore use a bhoosa-box for milk in the summer, unless you can open it occasionally and if necessary take the milk out of the bhoosa-box and boil it up again to prevent it going bad.



Other advantages of bhoosa-boxes for all purposes :

1. Less smoke in the ahata.
2. Less danger of fire from the cow-dung hara being knocked over while the housewife is away.
3. Fewer accidents to children from burning.
4. The housewife will be saved from the waste of time and the dirty drudgery of dung-cake making.
5. Everything in the bhoosa-box is safe from cats, dogs or any other animal, or from being spilt or knocked over.
6. A great saving of trouble and a definitely better way of keeping anything hot which requires to be kept hot and of cooking anything that takes a long time to cook or has to be cooked slowly.
7. Hot water in the morning without having to get up early to make a fire and boil it.

8. More manure and therefore better crops, bigger incomes, better fed cattle, and so healthier and happier children and grown-ups.

A bhoosa-box will keep milk or water so hot that if put in boiling they will still be too hot to drink six hours later. It has been found that in a good bhoosa-box, kept exactly as shown above, the temperature only dropped about five degrees Fahrenheit every hour.

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